

ENTERTAINMENT/A2-1

A-list celebs among 38 in auditions for hosts, judges in RP 'Idol'

WORLD/A25

Opus Dei asks 'Da Vinci' film makers to stress movie work of fiction

NEWS/A13

RP now world's top exporter of nurses; POEA restricts pilots

ACROSS/A18

Sen. Lapid tagged lobbying for P300-M interchange in Porac, Pampanga

Bunye's 2 wishes for Erap: Good health, good looks

By Nelson E. Flores, Christine O. Avendano and Luige A. del Puerto

TWO BIRTHDAY BOYS, four wishes. If former President Joseph Estrada could have two wishes as he

BUNYE'S/A13



email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, April 19, 2006

4 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 130

PIB website: www.inq7.net

WISH KO
LANG ANG
KATOTOHANAN!



BUNYE'S/A13

UN honors RP soldier who was killed in Haiti

By Volt Contreras

IT'S RAINING MEDALS FOR FILIPINO TROOPS on peacekeeping missions abroad.

First, the United Nations is giving posthumous honors to Army Staff Sgt. Antonio Batomalaque, who was killed in a firefight in Haiti on April 14 last year, the Department of Foreign Affairs announced yesterday.

UN HONORS/A12

Chop-chop slays in Saudi

10 Filipinos held; body parts found

By Volt Contreras

AT LEAST 10 FILIPINOS have been held by Saudi police following the discovery of dismembered bodies and the disappearance of six of their compatriots in southern Jeddah, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs.

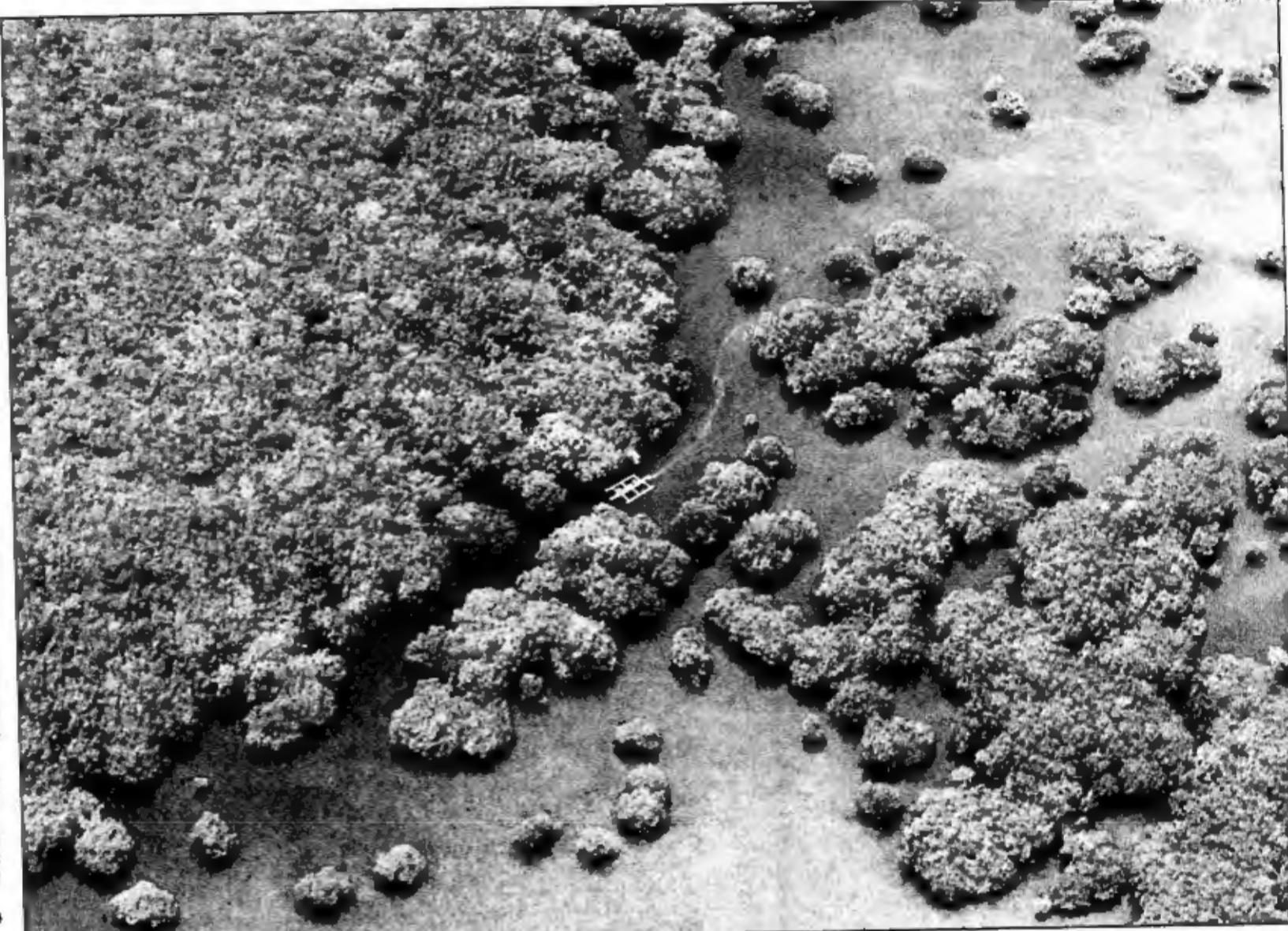
The arrested Filipinos were being kept incommunicado by investigators and could remain so for up to 60 days under Saudi law, the DFA said yesterday as it withheld the identities of the suspects and that of the missing Filipinos.

The suspects and the missing persons were initially described in the report as being engaged in "illegal lottery, like *jueteng*, financed by some Arabs and some Filipinos" as well as in the "cell-phone card business," he said.

"Baka nagka-onsehan (They might have scammed each other)," the official mused.

Two of the six missing Filipinos were women and included a couple, he added. It also appeared that the missing persons knew each other.

CHOP-CHOP/A28



PATCHES OF GREEN

This mangrove forest somewhere near Hindang and Inopacan in Southern Leyte is always a refreshing sight in our time of vanishing forest cover and endangered underwater life forms.

Lawyer tags Abalos poll fraud brains

By Cynthia D. Balana and Jerome Aning

AN ELECTION LAWYER OF THE OPPOSITION will file an impeachment complaint against Commission on Elections Chair Benjamin Abalos for allegedly allowing former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to engage in vote-rigging during the May 2004 elections.

Because the Comelec is a constitutional body, its chair and commissioners can be removed from office only through impeachment.

Sixto Brillantes, counsel for former

LAWYER/A21

NO GANG RAPE IN SUBIC
Gonzalez: I almost exonerated them

By Armand N. Nocum and Volt Contreras

JUSTICE SECRETARY RAIUL GONZALEZ had wanted to clear three of four US Marines in the rape of a 22-year-old Filipino last November but decided against it, fearing a public backlash.

"I almost exonerated them. But I didn't, if only to satisfy the mob," Gonzalez told reporters.

And so, instead of facing rape charges as principals, Marine Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic

Duplantis and S/Sgt. Chad Carpenter would be charged as accessories in the Nov. 1, 2005, incident at the Subic Bay Freeport. They face from 6 to 12 years' imprisonment if convicted.

The main suspect, however, Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith, would be charged with rape for allegedly sexually abusing the woman inside a van while on furlough at the close of a joint RP-US counterterrorism exercise in the Philippines.

Rape has a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Gonzalez said he decided to include

Silkwood, Duplantis and Carpenter, who were in the van when the alleged rape happened, as accessories because they did nothing to stop Smith.

"The fact is that they knew what was going on ... and yet they did nothing. That makes them accessories," he said.

Gonzalez said he also gave weight to the admission of the victim that it was only Smith who actually committed the sexual assault.

"There was no gang rape. It is impossible to gang-rape the victim in 30 minutes."

GONZALEZ/A20

RP braces for shock as oil hits \$71 per barrel

By Christine O. Avendano and Abigail L. Ho

THE GOVERNMENT IS LOOKING AT measures like improving the public's access to ethanol and coco-diesel and expanding the number of gas stations offering a P1-discount on diesel fuel to public utility vehicles to cushion the impact of escalating world oil prices on Pilipino consumers.

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla said Cabinet officials expanded yesterday the mitigating measures put in place last year "in order to address the resurgence of high oil prices in the international market."

RP BRACES/A9

Spain lauds GMA for commuting death sentences

Rep. Asistio: I was a death row convict

By Michael Lim Ubac

CLAIMING THAT PRESIDENTIAL clemency saved his life, a former death row inmate, Caloocan Rep. Lulu "Baby" Asistio, supports the decision of President Macapagal-Arroyo to commute all death sentences to life imprisonment.

"I was a death row convict before I became a congressman," Asistio told d2MM reporter Anthony Taberna in an overseas telephone call from Los Angeles.

He added that he once served in the infamous but privileged role of a prison "mayor" [cell block leader] during martial law.

Asistio also confirmed the exis-

RE ASISTIO/A21



INIBID-BOUND: Larraga in 1999 on board a boat from Cebu to Manila and on to death row.

By Volt Contreras and Jocelyn R. Uy

SPAIN IS THE FIRST FOREIGN GOVERNMENT to laud President Macapagal-Arroyo for her controversial Easter message commuting all death sentences to life terms.

The Spanish foreign ministry has thanked Ms Arroyo for staying the execution of Francisco "Paco" Javier Larraga Gonzalez, who was convicted along with six others of the 1997 rape-murder of sisters Marijoy and Jacqueline Chiong in Cebu City. (See related

story on this page.) Larraga, a scion of the politically entrenched Osmeña clan of Cebu, is a dual citizen with a Spanish father (former pelotari Manuel Francisco Larraga) and Filipino mother (Margarita Gonzalez), according to the Department of Foreign Affairs, which released the ministry's statement yesterday.

"The [Spanish] government is pleased with the measure of commuting the death penalty by the President of the Philippines, which will benefit [Paco Larraga]," the DFA said in a

SPAIN/A20

No pardon, no parole, no way...

By Jhunex Napalacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—DISMAY WAS THE REACTION of the mother of rape-murder victims Marijoy and Jacqueline Chiong to President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to commute all death sentences to life terms.

But Thelma Chiong, national vice president of the Crusade Against Violence (CAV), said she was not surprised. She said that she had known the President's position on the death penalty for a year now, and that she respected this stance.

Thelma said she twice asked Ms Ar-

NO PARDON/A21

IN THE KNOW

Why oil prices are rising

OIL PRICES RECENTLY HIT HISTORICAL highs due to increasing worries over a supply shortage amid the conflict in Nigeria, tensions over Iran's nuclear program and the anticipated increase in demand in the United States during the summer months.

In Nigeria, militants demanding that locals get more benefits from their country's energy wealth have resorted to destroying oil facilities and kidnapping foreign oil workers. Their actions, which started in mid-February, have already cut Nigerian production by more than 25 percent. Nigeria is Africa's leading oil exporter and the world's eighth largest.

WHY/A9

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with rainshowers. Southern Mindanao will have mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

COMPILED BY KAT E. PEDROSCO FOR RESEARCH/04/18/06

SOURCE: PAGASA

Japanese firm agrees to pay for Naia 3 repairs

By Dadim L. Lucas

THE JAPANESE CONTRACTOR which government regulators have blamed for the allegedly shoddy workmanship in the mothballed Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 has agreed to shoulder the cost of repairs in the facility, transportation department officials said.

Takenaka Corp. has apparently done so to avoid the stigma and the financial cost of being blacklisted by the Philippine government, said DOTC Assistant Secretary Robert R. Castañares.

"Takenaka has agreed to rectify the structural defects in Naia 3 and the new Bacolod airport at their own expense, following a meeting with Secretary Leandro Mendoza," he said.

Apart from the collapsed ceiling at the Naia 3, a government inspection team also discovered cracks in the runway of the Silay airport in Negros Occidental which Takenaka is also building.

The collapse of a section of the Naia 3's ceiling last month delayed the new terminal's test run which would have been the first step in the much-delayed opening of the terminal which was taken over by government after the Supreme Court voided the contract with Philippine International Air Terminal Co. (Piatco) consortium.

It was Piatco that contracted the Japan-based Takenaka to build the terminal.

Takenaka is claiming up to \$100 million in payments from the government for the work it has done on Naia 3.

Castañares said the Japanese contractor has not been absolved of culpability in what the transportation department believes is the shoddy quality of its work.

"Takenaka is not yet off the hook until DOTC is satisfied with the quality of the repair work," Castañares said.

In addition, he said the DOTC wanted to determine whether Takenaka was grossly negligent or if there was an attempt to defraud the government by using substandard materials.

Despite the dispute, the government advanced \$10 million to the contractor so it would finish the work.

Castañares noted, however, that the company seemed to have slackened off work after the advance payment was made.

DOTC officials called Takenaka officials to a meeting last week where the contractor was given an ultimatum.

"Secretary Mendoza threatened to blacklist Takenaka not only in the DOTC but also in other government infrastructure agencies if it can be proven that substandard materials were used in Naia 3 and [the] Bacolod airport," Castañares said.

"So far, Takenaka has been very cooperative in the ongoing investigation," he said.

By Philip C. Tuba and TJ Burgos

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SHOULD "BITE THE BULLET" and order the full release of the Mayuga Report which the military has refused to submit to Congress without her approval, Parañaque Rep. Roilo Golez said yesterday.

Golez, former national security adviser to Ms Arroyo, said the President should scrap Executive Order 464—which bars executive branch officials from testifying at congressional hearings without the President's consent—which the military has used to justify its withholding the report from Congress.

Golez said it would have been "unthinkable" in previous administrations for the Armed Forces to stand up to Congress and refuse a request for a copy of any report.

"PGMA should scrap EO 464, respect the Constitution, and bite the bullet," said Golez.

"But knowing her, she would not do that. It's survival at all costs, like a man in the sinking Titanic elbowing and kicking women and children to save himself," he said.

The report, prepared by a fact-finding board headed by Navy Flag-Officer in Command Vice-Admiral Mateo Mayuga, cleared Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Gabriel Habacan, and retired Lt. General Roy Kyamto of accusations that they engaged in poll fraud during the 2004 elections.

A fourth general mentioned in the Hello Garci wiretapped conversations, retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani, was also cleared.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, the chair of the Senate committee on national defense which is investigating the Hello Garci scandal, demanded from defense department officials a copy of the report as well as the statements and affidavits of the 70 witnesses interviewed by the fact-finding board.

But Mayuga, who gave the public a summary of the report on a government TV station last Wednesday, has indicated that the report was a "secret document" because of the "confidential information" given by witnesses.

"That's not acceptable. This isn't about national security. This is about the alleged criminal acts of certain public officials," said Biazon in a phone interview yesterday.

He said he was studying what options were open to him on how to compel the military to produce the report, hinting that going to court might be one such option.

Senate President Franklin Drilon said the Senate could subpoena Mayuga to present the report

itself when Congress resumes sessions on May 15 after its month-long Lenten recess.

"We can force Vice Admiral Mayuga to submit the full report through a subpoena," he said in a phone interview. "The public deserves to know the full contents of the report."

But he admitted that if the Palace were to invoke EO 464 again, the subpoena would be useless.

"This brings to the fore the real necessity for the Supreme Court to resolve EO 464," he said.

Malacañang dismissed the critics of the whole Mayuga report snafu as "predisposed" against the President.

In a radio interview, Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said that the Mayuga board was only keeping its promise to the witnesses not to divulge their identities in exchange for their cooperation.

Ermita said that some contents of the Mayuga report were "treading on national security" matters that it was "imperative" to keep them from the public.

"It does not mean they are hiding something," Ermita said.

The problem with the detractors of the President is that whenever they think up of charges to throw against her and investigate them, they are predisposed to think that whatever is on their mind should necessarily be the outcome of the investigation. If it turns out different, they will claim it's a whitewash," said Ermita. With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan and Donna Pascibugan

Mines probers miss April 10 deadline

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE FACT-FINDING COMMISSION CREATED by Malacañang to look into the impact on the environment of the Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project in Albay has failed to meet its April 10 deadline to submit its report to President Macapagal-Arroyo. (See related story on Page A19)

"We are still studying it. We have to put things together; it takes time," Sorsogon Bishop Arturo Bastes, commission chair, told the Inquirer in a telephone interview yesterday.

Bastes said the fact-finding body would be meeting tomorrow and on Friday to consolidate and prepare the report to the President.

The Rapu-Rapu Fact-Finding Commission

was created by Ms Arroyo through Administrative Order No. 145 issued on March 10 to probe the mine spill that affected fishing in the waters around Rapu-Rapu island after the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines took a stand against large-scale mining in the country.

The mine was owned by Lafayette Philippines Inc., a subsidiary of an Australian mining company.

Bastes had earlier said it would be "impossible" for the panel to meet its April 10 deadline because of the large number of people it had to interview and the voluminous documents it had to review.

Bastes said he would ask the President to extend the deadline by at least one month but

he did not say yesterday if Malacañang had granted an extension.

"What we have is not yet what is expected of us so we need more time to look into the impact on health, etc., before we give the final recommendation," Bastes had said.

The fact-finding team is composed of nine technical experts and community representatives from Albay and Sorsogon. It has been conducting stakeholder consultations and hearings since last month.

The group had invited former Environment Secretaries Antonio Cerilles, Heherson Alvarez, Eliseo Gozon and Michael Defensor as well as current Secretary Angelo Reyes to a hearing but only Alvarez showed up. With Christine O. Avendano

Lafayette vows to do good for island

LAFAYETTE PHILIPPINES Inc. has lined up various projects to dramatically improve the quality of life in and around Rapu-Rapu Island.

Company chair and president Carlos Dominguez announced this yesterday, adding some projects are already being implemented. Other projects, he said in a press statement, are in different stages of preparation while some will go on stream once the company is allowed to resume operations.

Dominguez, whose management team took over Lafayette in mid-January, said the company is focused on regaining the trust of the host communities and making them realize it is sincere in its efforts to be their partner in growth.

Lafayette said it expected to spend about P320 million a year for its supplies, including grocery, meat, fish and office needs, that would be locally bought.

This is aside from the P10 million a year needed to provide the three barangays around its mine with free street lighting, electricity, medical support and livelihood projects, Dominguez said.

United Auctioneers, Inc.

INSPECTION DATES: April 23, 24 & 25, 2006
INSPECTION & REGISTRATION START ON SUNDAY

"NO MINIMUM PRICE"
3-DAY PUBLIC AUCTION



"THE BEST
AUCTION IN
SUBIC BAY!"

AUCTION DATES:
APRIL
26, 27, & 28, 2006

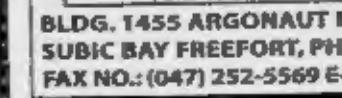
SALE STARTS AT 8:30 A.M. SHARP



ISUZU 10W DUMP TRUCK



LATE MODEL



ALSO AVAILABLE LOCALLY ACQUIRED VEHICLE

4X4

2.5 ENGINE

MITSUBISHI 5 DOOR



SWEET DEALS FROM SINGAPORE AIRLINES

AIRFARES

SINGAPORE
from
US\$248

MALAYSIA
from
US\$298

THAILAND & VIETNAM
from
US\$318

INDONESIA
from
US\$348

AUSTRALIA
from
US\$448

WEST COAST USA
(non-Executive Economy Class)
from
US\$838

EUROPE
from
US\$898

PACKAGES

SINGAPORE
from
US\$288

MALAYSIA
from
US\$348

THAILAND & SINGAPORE
from
US\$388

BALI
from
US\$398

SHEN REAP & SINGAPORE
from
US\$518

AUSTRALIA
from
US\$618

MALDIVES
from
US\$828

For more information visit singaporeair.com.

A great way to fly
SINGAPORE AIRLINES

• 100% non-smoking

Valid for purchases until 30 April 2006, and for departures until 31 May 2006. Applicable surcharges will apply for 7-12 April departures to Singapore, Malaysia and Indonesia. Discount available on children below 12 years old.

Package prices are based on adult fare-sharing accommodations. Single supplement not applicable.

All prices quoted are per person based on midweek Economy Class travel and include taxes, fees and other charges.

Flight taxes and fuel surcharges apply.

For more information on the above rates, please call SIA Reservations or 734-8888 (for midweek), 834-7000 or 734-5151 to 22 or 734-8899 (for 700-life package), or your travel agent.

Other terms and conditions apply.

For more information on the above rates, please call SIA Reservations or 734-8888 (for midweek), 834-7000 or 734-5151 to 22 or 734-8899 (for 700-life package), or your travel agent.

BLDG. 1455 ARGONAUT HIGHWAY, TEL. NOS: (047) 252-1129 * 252-1155 TO 58 * (02) 922-0810

SUBIC BAY FREEPORT, PHILIPPINES (02) 711-5270 * CEL NOS: (0917) 7262824 * (0917) 8388094

FAX NO.: (047) 252-5569 E-MAIL: usasubic@uol.godns.com * WEBSITE: www.usasubic.godns.com

TRUCK & EQUIPMENT FINANCING AVAILABLE THRU: CREDIT METRO LEASING & FINANCING CORP. TEL. (02) 544-5444

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

Weather forecast
Bacolod
Baganga
Leyte
Clark Zone
Tuguegaray
Leyte
Capiz
Cebu
Tribukhan
Batac, Samar
Zamboanga
Cagayan de Oro
Davao

Partly cloudy
Partly cloudy
Partly cloudy
Partly cloudy
Partly cloudy
Partly cloudy
Cloudy with rain
Cloudy with rain



**FOR PEOPLE WITH DIABETES,
FINALLY A TASTY SNACK THAT
HELPS CONTROL SUGAR LEVELS TOO.**

NUTREN BALANCE HAS BEEN CLINICALLY PROVEN TO:

- ✓ CONTROL YOUR BLOOD GLUCOSE*
 - ✓ LOWER YOUR CHOLESTEROL**
 - ✓ HELP DELAY HUNGER BECAUSE
YOU FEEL FULL AND SATISFIED**



Ask your doctor about Nutren Balance or call 898-0061. Available in Mercury Drug and other leading drugstores nationwide.



Before
146 lbs.

A decorative vertical border on the left side of the page. It features a repeating pattern of stylized, blocky characters that resemble a combination of the letters 'G', 'U', 'P', and 'F'. The border is rendered in a dark, textured font against a white background.



After
135 lbs.



"From a
bulging
34 inches,
I'm back
into my
size 27 jeans
again!"

"If Marie France isn't the best yet, then I don't know what is. My bulging post natal tummy is now flat and firm. Those pesky saddlebags and cellulites, which I've had even during pre-pregnancy, have at last quickly disappeared. Thanks to Marie France I didn't just get my figure back, I can say goodbye to my pear-shaped body and hello to a curvaceous, sexier me!"

-Dawn Zulueta-Lagdameo

CALL
894-BODY (2639)

MAKATI

ORTIGA

TOMAS MORATO

BINONDO

ALABANG

SHAW

CONGRESSIONAL

PAMPANGA • TEL: 961-2981

CEBU • TEL: 233-7637

RSBS CASE VS GENERAL

Prosecutor bucks justice's inhibition

By Nelson E. Flores

A GOVERNMENT PROSECUTOR has opposed the motion filed by former Armed Forces of the Philippines-Retirement and Separation Benefits System president Brig. Gen. Jose Ramiscal (ret.) asking that a Sandiganbayan justice inhibit himself from hearing the former's graft, estafa and falsification cases due to bias.

Assistant Special Prosecutor III John L.C. Turalba, in a four-page opposition to Ramiscal's motion, said the former AFP-RSBS head failed to cite a valid reason for seeking the inhibition of Sandiganbayan Fourth Division Associate Justice Jose R. Hernandez, adding that the grounds he invoked were "mere speculations

and conjectures."

Ramiscal in the motion filed by his lawyer, Emelita Habacon-Garaybles, on April 4 pointed out that Hernandez was married to Prof. Carolina G. Hernandez, a member of the Feliciano Commission who had reportedly recommended the "vigorous prosecution" of all the accused in the RSBS cases.

The Feliciano Commission probed the 2003 Oakwood mutiny instigated by junior military officers protesting, among other things, corruption in the military establishment, including the AFP-RSBS.

"As the husband of Professor Hernandez, the honorable Jose Hernandez is disqualified from presiding over the instant cases.

Inevitably, the effect of their spousal relationship is, at the very least, to create the impression of partiality and bias which the rules zealously guard against to maintain the independence and integrity of the courts, as well as ensure the cold neutrality of an impartial judge," said Ramiscal in his motion.

But Turalba argued that Professor Hernandez was only one member of the Feliciano Commission, a collegiate body.

He also labeled as unfair Ramiscal's assertion that Hernandez's presence on the bench could taint "with undue influence" any decision reached by the court.

"What is more intriguing is the fact that of the 15 accused, only

Ramiscal saw the need for the inhibition of honorable Justice Hernandez," Turalba said.

Ramiscal is facing 13 counts of graft, 12 counts of falsification of public documents and one case of estafa in the Sandiganbayan in connection with alleged anomalous real estate acquisitions by the AFP-RSBS in Tanauan, Batangas, during his term as its president in 1996-1997.

Graft investigators said the RSBS paid out P195.85 million to acquire 148 parcels of land. Tax records, however, showed the actual cost of the land was only P28.23 million.

The investigators said two deeds of sale were drawn up—one for P28.23 million and the other for P195.85 million.

Corrections

IN THE APRIL 12 issue, a front-page story—"22 officials join Gloria in Baguio retreat; 9 abroad"—misstated that Marlon Advincula is the chair of the National Anti-Poverty Commission. According to the NAPC structure, President Macapagal-Arroyo is its chair. NAPC's lead convenor or secretary general is Datu Zamzam Ampatuan. Advincula is a member of the sectoral council of people with disabilities, which is working with the government.

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a photo caption on the front page misstated that Leo Echegaray died 13 years ago. Echegaray was the first victim of lethal injection. He died seven years ago, on Feb. 5, 1999.

IN YESTERDAY'S issue, a story on Page A2—"Driver to face new probe in Subic rape"—misspelled the name of the victim's lawyer. It should have been Evelyn Ursua—not Evelyn Ursua.

IN THE APRIL 13 issue, a story on Page A13—"Cherry blossom tree blooms in artist's front yard"—misspelled the Japanese term for "flower viewing" as hanami. It should be hanami.

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, China Roces Avenue corner Magsaysay Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw-Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

Tax take up 28% for first quarter

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL Revenue collected P134.96 billion in the first quarter of the year, 28.5 percent higher than the P105 billion collected during the same period last year.

The BIR also surpassed its P131.39-billion revenue collection target for the first quarter of the year by 2.7 percent, boosting the chances of the national government to further trim down its budget deficit.

Enhanced system

Revenue authorities attributed the increase in collection to several revenue-enhancement programs, including the enhanced tax audit system.

President Macapagal-Arroyo announced the first quarter collections of the BIR which she said accounts for about 80 percent of the national government's revenues.

Thus, higher BIR collections make the government comfortable in meeting its fiscal targets.

For 2006, the Arroyo administration wants to reduce its budget deficit to only P124.9 billion from P146.8 billion last year.

Deficit reduction

To help meet the budget-deficit reduction target, the BIR is tasked with collecting P675.4 billion for the whole year.

Fiscal officials said the BIR's first-quarter collection keeps it on track to meet its full-year revenue collection target.

The President likewise cited the improved revenue collection performance of the Bureau of Customs, the second-largest revenue earner for the government.

The BOC earlier reported that it collected P42 billion in the first quarter of the year, higher than its P38.62-billion target. The first quarter collection of the BOC was also higher than the P30 billion it collected during the same period last year.

An Appeal to Our People: Actively Participate in the Discussions on Charter Change

MAKE YOUR VOICE BE HEARD.

Charter Change will dramatically, if not drastically, change our form of government. But it won't guarantee a better government. It doesn't guarantee national unity. Nor a better life for most Filipinos.

Instead of a President, as we have now, we will have a Prime Minister. Instead of the President, our leader, being elected directly by the people, the Prime Minister (PM) will be elected by our congressmen who will now be called Members of Parliament (MPs). The PM himself will be a congressman or MP first before being elected PM.

In other words, the people will lose their power to choose their leader directly in a nationwide popular vote.

The present Senate will be absorbed into the Interim Parliament.

The Executive (what we now call the President) and the Legislature (what we now call Congress) will be virtually one and the same.

IS THIS WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT?

Yet, up to 12 million signatures are being gathered by Cha-Cha proponents to push Charter Change. This is what is called the People's Initiative. It is being used to amend the Constitution wholesale, instead of piece by piece as people's initiative is commonly and *legally* intended to be.

This is why the Consumer & Oil Price Watch is making this appeal to the people.

*Make your voice be heard. Make the true will of the people prevail.
Make our democracy work. For your future. For the people.*

The Cha-Cha proponents want the people to vote on the following, using a single question:

1. Shift from the Presidential to Parliamentary form of government. The present Congress, 236 congressmen and those senators who want to join, will be converted into an Interim Parliament until June 30, 2007. The Interim Parliament will set the date of the first Parliamentary election to choose the regular members of the regular Parliament in 2010.
2. The incumbent President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, and incumbent Vice-President, Noli de Castro, will hold office until June 30, 2010 but their roles will be ceremonial as the powers will rest with the Prime Minister and the interim members of the parliament.
3. After 2010, the most powerful person will be the Prime Minister. The PM shall appoint the members of the Supreme Court, Justices and Judges of the lower courts. The PM shall be the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Philippines with the rank of Brigadier General or Commodore. The chairmen and commissioners of the Comelec, Civil Service Commissions, and Commission on Audit shall also be appointed by the PM.
4. Within 10 years after the approval of Cha-Cha, a federal system of government shall be established. The parliament shall provide by law the division of the country into as many "independent states", allocating uniform powers and reserving to the federal government powers on national defense, foreign relations, monetary policies, and other such powers deemed imperative.

IS THIS WHAT THE PEOPLE WANT?

We reiterate our appeal to the people. Make your voice be heard.

- A. Do you agree with the 4 transitory amendments stated above?

- YES, I agree
 NO, I do not agree

- B. Do you want elections to be held for ALL elective officials under the parliamentary system?

- YES, I want elections to be held in May 2007
 YES, I want elections to be held in May 2010

Send your answers to our Special Cha-Cha Information Hotline numbers.
Please include your name, address, barangay, city or province.

Call 812-6595 or 844-7256 • Fax to 818-8285
Text to 0917-8103363 • Email to rtc@ci.com.ph

This ad will appear in major tabloids and provincial newspapers nationwide.



Raul T. Concepcion
RAUL T. CONCEPCION
Chairman

PHILIP MORRIS

FEEL THE CHILL

IN A

PORSCHE BOXSTER



1 PORSCHE BOXSTER
2.7 ROADSTER

15 BOSE 3-2-1 GS-II
HOME ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM



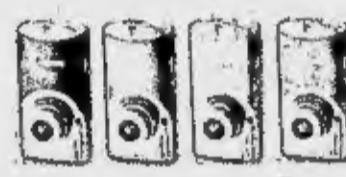
20 APPLE iBOOK 40 GB



45 SONY ERICSSON
W800i MOBILE PHONES



65 CANON IXUS iZOOM
DIGITAL CAMERAS



160 APPLE
iPOD NANO 2GB



1. Promotion period is from April 10 to June 4, 2006.

2. Only adult smokers 18 years old and above (as of April 1, 2006), who are Philippine residents, can enter the PHILIP MORRIS "FEEL THE CHILL" promotion.

3. To enter the draw, write your name, address, age (as of April 1, 2006), telephone number and signature on the back of an empty pack of any Philip Morris variant.

4. Only genuine and original Philip Morris packs – manufactured by Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc. (Philip Morris) purchased in the Philippines, and bearing the Philippine Government health warning and pack seal with complete information requested in item 3, will be accepted as valid raffle entries.

5. No photocopies or counterfeits of Philip Morris packs will be allowed. Once submitted, all Philip Morris' packs will become the property of Philip Morris, including the right to edit, publish, and use the information therein without any consideration or payment to the participant. Raffle entries will not be acknowledged or returned.

6. Drop your entries in drop boxes at authorized retail outlets/drop centers or mail to:

PHILIP MORRIS "FEEL THE CHILL" PROMO
c/o Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc.
MCC P.O. Box 2338
1225 Makati City

7. All entries must be received by Philip Morris not later than June 4, 2006. Philip Morris and its agents will have no responsibility for lost, illegible, incomplete, misdirected, mutilated, postage due, or late entries.

8. The draw will be held on June 23, 2006 in the presence of a DOH-BFAD representative. The following prizes will be drawn:

Quantity	Description of Prize
1	Porsche Boxster 2.7 Roadster
18	Bose 3-2-1 GS-II Home Entertainment System
20	Apple iBook 40 GB
45	Sony Ericsson W800i mobile phones
65	Canon IXUS iZOOM digital cameras
160	Apple iPod Nano 2GB

THE 2006 PHILIP MORRIS "FEEL THE CHILL" OFFICIAL MECHANICS

9. The names of the winners will be published in one of the leading newspapers not later than July 16, 2006. Winners will be notified via telegram as to when and where they can claim their prizes. By participating, the winners agree to the inclusion of their names and/or pictures in the Winners Advertisement.

10. Prizes will only be awarded to the person whose name appears on the winning entry. Prizes not claimed within 30 days from publication of the winners, or notification of winners, whichever comes later, will be forfeited with the written approval of the DOH-BFAD.

11. In claiming a prize, the winner must present the original notification telegram from Philip Morris and two (2) original and valid identification documents (Driver's license, Passport, Birth Certificate) and Tax Identification Number (TIN). The IDs presented (singly or collectively) should show the following information below. If the IDs submitted do not contain the following three (3) pieces of information, it will not be accepted as valid proof of identification:

- Full Name
- Date of Birth or Age
- Signature

12. In case the winner is unable to present two (2) original and valid ID's acceptable to Philip Morris, he/she must submit sworn affidavits, executed by two (2) disinterested persons attesting to his/her identity, and a certification from the responsible municipality/city official certifying that he/she is a resident of the said municipality/city.

13. In cases wherein the winner cannot personally claim the prize for any reason, he/she can send a proxy. The proxy should be able to present the following:

- A letter of authorization duly signed by the winner, nominating the proxy as the acknowledged recipient of the prize on the winner's behalf.
- Two (2) original and valid ID's of the winner (singly or collectively showing the required information as mentioned in Item 11).
- Two (2) original and valid ID's of the proxy.
- Original copy of the notification telegram from Philip Morris.

14. An entrant can only win once. If a person is drawn more than once, the winner will receive the prize of the higher value and a winner for the other prize will be re-drawn.

15. Prizes are not transferable or convertible to cash.

16. Prizes will be supplied with standard dealers' warranties only, where available. Philip Morris and its agents will not be liable with respect to (i) any death or injury or consequential loss or damage arising from the use of any prize; (ii) any dealer's refusal to honor any warranty.

17. Prizes are subject to availability and supplier's restrictions. Philip Morris may, without notice, withdraw or substitute any prize with comparable value and nature.

18. Philip Morris will only pay final withholding taxes on a prize amounting to more than PHP 10,000. Except as expressly provided herein, Philip Morris will not be liable to the winners for any taxes, costs, liabilities or expenses that may arise out of ownership or use of the prizes.

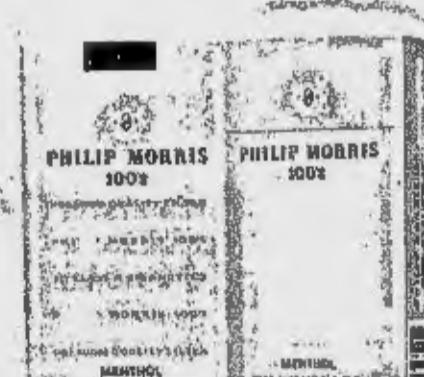
19. All decisions of Philip Morris and its agents are final and no objections will be entertained.

20. Employees of Philip Morris, their affiliates, distributors, advertising and promotional agencies, as well as their relatives up to the 2nd degree of consanguinity or affinity, and DOH-BFAD are not eligible to participate in this promotion.

21. These terms and conditions are subject to any relevant law, government direction and regulation. The promotion will be void where prohibited or restricted by law. Venue of any action arising under this promotion shall be brought solely in the proper courts of Makati City, all other available venues of suit being waived.

JOIN NOW!

Philip Morris 100's. Premium Taste in Menthol.



Government Warning:
Cigarette smoking is dangerous
to your health

Photos may vary from actual unit.
P.O. DOH-BFAD No. 0118 Series of 2006.
See flyers for more details.

More anti-GMA Pinoys favor Cha-cha, says survey

By Cyril L. Bonabente, Christian V. Esguerra and TJ Burgoon

FILIPINOS WHO BELIEVE PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation would be good for the country favor constitutional reform more than those who believe the country would fare better if she stayed, according to the results of a new survey by Pulse Asia.

Pulse Asia consultant Mario Taguiwalo said a national poll conducted from Feb. 14 to March 4 showed that 59 percent of Filipinos thought it would be best if the President resigned, and 46 percent of this number also wanted the 1987 Constitution changed.

But of the 34 percent of Filipinos who wanted Ms Arroyo to stay, only 36 percent favored Charter change, Taguiwalo added.

In short, 27 percent of Filipinos

wanted both Cha-cha and the President's resignation, while 12 percent wanted Cha-cha and to let her stay.

Of those who wanted the President to resign, 48 percent were not in favor of Charter change. Given the survey's error margin of three percentage points, this means there is a statistical tie between the anti-GMA who favor Cha-cha and the anti-GMA opposed to Cha-cha.

On the other hand, pro-GMA Filipinos who favored Cha-cha (36 percent) were outnumbered by the pro-GMA who disagreed with it (54 percent).

The results of the survey were released as the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), an umbrella organization of various Protestant denominations, added its voice to the growing opposition to the Malacañang-backed move to amend the Constitution through a people's initiative.

"What good would a change in the Constitution do when the process is clearly wrapped in the agenda of...those who want to further perpetuate themselves in power, including President Arroyo who is facing serious doubts (over) the legitimacy of her rule?" the NCCP said in a statement titled "Not at This Time, Not for the Wrong Reasons."

The NCCP said it shared the position of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, which had earlier voiced alarm over the timing and manner of the proposed shift to a parliamentary system.

"We will transform our Easter prayers into acts that will frustrate any attempt, Charter change included, that will jeopardize the freedom, sovereignty and welfare of the Filipino people," it added.

Like the Catholic bishops, the Protestants said they were not against constitutional reform but were concerned that it was being done "at a time when the grim spectre of a more authoritarian rule seems to loom in the horizon."

Meanwhile, the Liga ng mga Barangay sa Pilipinas announced yesterday it was mounting a public information campaign on Charter change in all of the country's 42,000 barangays to enable people to make an "informed choice."

In the same statement, the Charter Change Advocacy Commission (AdCom) said it would resume its campaign today with a three-

day offensive in Mindanao, where the Confederation of Mindanao Governors and Mayors headed by North Cotabato Gov. Manny Piñol had already announced its support.

At least 10 senators led by Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan are conducting their own information drive to raise public awareness of the issues involved in having the Constitution amended.

Pangilinan kicked off the Senate's campaign in a meeting with local officials in General Santos and Davao cities last Monday.

"It is not that we oppose Charter change per se, but we oppose the manner in which they are proposing how we are to undertake it," Pangilinan told reporters at the Senate yesterday.

In his talks with local officials, the senator said he learned that the administration's claims that the clamor for Charter change in the countryside was overwhelming were inaccurate.

"Contrary to what they are saying, the people in General Santos, Davao City and other parts of the country don't know where the clamor for Charter change is coming from," he said.

Searching for the American Dream?

We have answers to all of your U.S. immigration questions.

ATTY. ROBERT L. REEVES
Board Certified Immigration Law Specialist
in the California State Bar

We make success stories happen every day.

CALL US NOW TOLL-FREE (No long distance charges)
1-800-10-7733-837
(for Manila Residents) (2) 759-6777
or visit our website www.rreeves.com

REEVES & ASSOCIATES
Your Immigration Solution

MANILA
6767 Ayala Avenue, Suite 507
Makati City, Philippines

PASADENA
100 North Lake Avenue, 9th Floor
Pasadena, CA 91101 USA

SAN FRANCISCO
100 Market Street, Suite 1000
San Francisco, CA 94111 USA

BEIJING
2 Ji Wu Avenue, Suite 4715
Beijing, China

GREEN WILD SUMMER
The Environmental Summer Camp

Tired of city hassles?
Take a break and experience the thrill of being one with nature.

SORSOGON CONQUEST
April 29 - May 3, 2006

NORTH LUZON REDISCOVERY
May 12 - 14, 2006

AGUSAN ADVENTURE FEAT
May 25 - 28, 2006

Book now and call: Island Caravan at 896-1910 • 896-7569 • 896-1893 or e-mail us at skoal@skynet.net for other tour programs log on to www.islandcaravan.com

In Cooperation with:
Island Caravan    

The better choice is now even better.
And this is for keeps.

Our aircons
are made
with the exclusive
DURA-LAST® technology.
With optimized
anti-rust design,
your **CONDURA**
will remain rust-free
for years to come.



CONDURA

The better choice made even better.

Court grants Beltran plea for transfer to another hospital

By Tarra V. Quismundo
and Luige A. del Puerto

DETAINED PARTY-LIST REP CRISPIN BELTRAN scored a partial legal victory after a Makati court granted his appeal to be moved to a hospital of his choice provided he shouldered all expenses, and the Philippine National Police said yesterday that it would allow the transfer as soon as it receives the court's order.

Beltran, 73, has been held at the PNP General Hospital in Camp Crame shortly after his arrest on rebellion charges in the wake of President Macapagal-Arroyo's proclamation of a state of national emergency last February.

Still pending before Judge Jenny Lind Aldecoa-Delorino of the Makati Regional Trial Court's Branch 137 were Beltran's pleadings to be released from detention and for the dismissal of the charges against him. The ruling allowing Beltran to move to another hospital was issued last Monday.

"The judge resolved to grant the motion for him to undergo a thorough check-up at his own expense. But before he could be transferred, we will have to submit a written manifestation detailing where he would be transferred and what kind of treatment he would undergo," said Amylyn Sato, one of Beltran's lawyers.

The detained legislator had asked the court to allow his transfer to a better-equipped medical facility, saying he and his doctors feared a recurrence of a stroke he suffered last year in light of his stressful condition under detention.

"If there is an order from the court, the Philippine National Police will yield and obey that order," said PNP spokesman Senior Supt. Samuel Pagdilao. He added that Beltran would remain under police custody if the court's order simply involved a transfer to another medical facility.

In a statement issued by Beltran's office, the legislator said he hoped that the court would dismiss the "fabricated and utterly malicious" charges filed against him by the Department of Justice.

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Wednesday, April 19, 2006
Octave of Easter, Wednesday

1st Reading: Acts 3:1-10
Gospel: Luke 24:13-35

Two disciples of Jesus were going to Emmaus, a village seven miles from Jerusalem, and they talked about what had happened. While they were talking and wondering, Jesus came up and walked with them, but their eyes were held and they did not recognize him.

He asked, "What is this you are talking about?" The two stood still, looking sad. Then one named Cleophas answered, "Why, it seems you are the only traveler in Jerusalem who doesn't know what has happened there these past few days." And he asked, "What is it?"

They replied, "It is about Jesus of Nazareth. He was a prophet, you know, mighty in word and deed before God and the people. But the chief priests and our rulers sentenced him to death. They handed him over to be crucified. We had hoped that he would redeem Israel."

It is now the third day since all this took place. It is true that some women of our group have disturbed us. When they went to the tomb at dawn, they did not find his body; they came to tell us that they had seen a vision of angels who told them that Jesus was alive. Some friends of our group went to the tomb and found everything just as the women had said, but they did not see him."

He said to them, "How dull you are, how slow of understanding! You fail to believe the message of the prophets. Is it not written that the Christ should suffer all this and then enter his glory?" Then starting with Moses and going through the prophets, he explained to them everything in the Scripture concerning himself.

As they drew near the village they were heading for, Jesus made as if to go farther. But they prevailed upon him, "Stay with us, for night comes quickly. The day is now almost over." So he went in to stay with them. When they were at table, he took the bread, said a blessing, broke it and gave each a piece.

Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him; but he vanished out of their sight. And they said to each other, "Were not our hearts filled with ardent yearning when he was talking to us on the road and explaining the Scriptures?"

They immediately set out and returned to Jerusalem. There they found the Eleven and their companions gathered together. They were greeted by these words: "Yes, it is true, the Lord is risen! He has appeared to Simon!" Then the two told what had happened on the road and how Jesus made himself known when he broke bread with them.

Commentary
It is a marvelous week hearing the vastly different accounts of the disciples seeing the Risen Lord! And hearing in the Acts of the power that comes through those who believe and carry the risen Lord within them. Peter gives what he has: belief and memory. And Cleophas and his wife are brought back to life with the Scriptures in the mouth of Jesus, bringing them understanding and hope once again. It is passed on by word of mouth: word, story, memory, hope, life, and just the telling of the story summons life back into their hearts and flesh. We must tell the story in community and stay alive in the Risen Lord.

Claretian Publications Inc., 8 Mayumi St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, UP PO. Box 4, Diliman, 1101 Quezon City, Tel.: 921-2084; Fax: 921-2429; E-mail: cc@claret.org; Website: <http://www.bible.claret.org> (Claretian Publications Inc.) & <http://missionaries.claret.org> (Claretians in the Philippines)



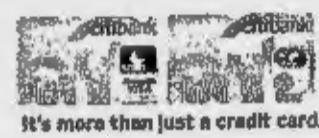
Dreams do come true.

READY FOR OCCUPANCY
15% DOWNPAYMENT
BALANCE IN 10 YEARS

Cathedral HEIGHTS
TOWNHOMES

STA. IGNACIANA ST., NEW MANILA, QUEZON CITY
(ADJACENT TO ST. LUKE'S MEDICAL CENTER)

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL:
416-5377 / 0916-2342663



It's more than just a credit card.

**Match & Win
₱1,000,000
with your Citibank credit card!**



**Calling all Citibank credit cardholders.
Now, you can be instant millionaires! More matching digits, more cash!**

Every single receipt of at least ₱1,000 charged to your Citibank credit card gives you a chance to Match and Win ₱1,000,000. Just match the last 6 digits of your Citibank credit card number with the 6-digit approval code on your sales slip.

Example: If the approval code on your sales slip is 07890000		
Credit Card Number	Match	Win Instant Prize
4539 1234 5678 9000	Last 6-digits	₱ 1,000,000
4539 2222 2222 9000	Last 5-digits	₱ 10,000
4539 3333 3333 9000	Last 4-digits	₱ 1,000
4539 7777 7777 7000	Last 3-digits	₱ 100

Once you get a match, text the following to claim your prize:

CITI<space>LAST 10 DIGITS OF YOUR CREDIT CARD NUMBER/
6-DIGIT APPROVAL CODE/TRANSACTION DATE(MMDDYY)

and send to 29768



With or without a match, you also get a chance to win ₱1,000,000 in the Grand Draw!

Just text CITI<space>LAST 10 DIGITS OF YOUR CREDIT CARD NUMBER/6-DIGIT APPROVAL CODE/

TRANSACTION DATE(MMDDYY) and send to 29768 for a chance to win ₱1,000,000 at the raffle!

Keep using your Citibank credit card from now until July 31, 2006 for a chance to be a millionaire!
Call 995-9999 or visit www.citibank.com.ph for details.

citibank

RP, Korea to mark 55th year of Battle of Yuldong

THE PHILIPPINES AND SOUTH KOREA WILL mark on Saturday the 55th anniversary of the "Battle of Yuldong," the most famous of the many victorious battles fought by Filipino soldiers during the Korean War (1950-53).

South Korean Ambassador Hong Jong Ki and Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, commanding general of the Philippine Army, will be the guests of honor during the 7 a.m. event at the Libingang mga Bayani.

They will be joined by veterans belonging to the five Battalion Combat Teams (BCTs) that comprised the Philippine Expeditionary Force to Korea (Pefok). Over 7,000 Filipino soldiers served in Korea from 1950 to 1955.

The Philippines suffered some 700 casualties in helping save South Korea from conquest by communist North Korea and China.

About 100 of these casualties were incurred in the bloody Yuldong battle by the 10th BCT, the first Filipino unit to fight in the Korean War. The

900 men of the 10th BCT withstood the assault of the Chinese 12th Army in a savage night that saw the Filipino lines remain unbroken.

Chinese casualties were in the thousands and the 10th BCT's successful defense stalled the advance of the Chinese 12th Army and its 40,000 men.

An account of the Philippines' participation in the Korea War can be found at www.geocities.com/pefok, a website written by Art Villasanta, son of the late Korean War correspondent Johnny Villasanta.

Welcoming the guests will be the officers of the Pefok Veterans Association Inc. (PVAI) led by its president, Brig. Gen. Bienvenido Castro (ret). PVAI is the only association of Filipino Korean War veterans, less than 3,000 of whom remain alive today.

Maj. Max Young (ret), president of PVAI's 10th BCT chapter, will deliver the welcome address. Veterans, their families and South

Koreans will lay wreaths at the graves of Filipinos killed in the Korean War.

The Battle of Yuldong is closely linked with the names of Capt. Conrado Yap and 1st Lt. Jose Artiga, the two officers who died at Yuldong. Artiga died leading his platoon of 17 men while Yap was killed in the attempt to retrieve the bodies of Artiga and his men.

Castro said Battle of Yuldong represents the many battles fought by Pefok in the Korean War. Pefok was undefeated in all its major battles against the North Koreans and Chinese.

Among these Filipino victories were the Battles at Karhwagol by the 20th BCT; the Battle of Arsenal by the 19th BCT and the Battle of Christmas Hill by the 14th BCT.

Pefok consisted of the 10th BCT; 19th BCT; 20th BCT; 14th BCT and 2nd BCT. Pefok served under the United Nations Command, a coalition of 21 countries led by the United States.

Filipino war veteran sues US for benefits

THE FIRST EVER COMPLAINT OF VIOLATIONS OF PRESIDENTIAL PROCLAMATIONS, ORDERS, DIRECTIVES AND OTHER STATUTES CONCERNING THE PAYMENT OF SALARY, ALLOWANCES AND PRIVILEGES, RAMOS ASKED THAT THE DEFENDANT UNITED STATES OF AMERICA GRANT HIM PAY BACK IN THE AMOUNT REPRESENTING THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHAT HE ACTUALLY RECEIVED DURING WORLD WAR II AND WHAT WAS MANDATED BY THE PRIMARY BASIC PAY STATUTE IN EXISTENCE AT THE TIME OF THEIR INDUCTION INTO THE US ARMED FORCES, PLUS INTEREST AND ATTORNEY'S FEES.

Rodrigo B. Ramos, a native of La Union, had apparently become weary of the long wait for US legislation to correct the infamous Rescission Act of 1948, which deprived Filipino soldiers who fought alongside American counterparts of equal benefits and privileges.

Ramos, now 80, fought as a constabulary and later a guerrilla recognized by the US Army during the WWI. Later, he enlisted in the US Navy. He filed the suit last November.

Citing six allegations of violations of presidential proclamations, orders, directives and other statutes concerning the payment of salary, allowances and privileges, Ramos asked that the defendant United States of America grant him pay back in the amount representing the difference between what he actually received during World War II and what was mandated by the primary basic pay statute in existence at the time of their induction into the US Armed Forces, plus interest and attorney's fees.

Ramos also demanded that he be recognized as a US citizen by birth since he said he was born in the Philippines during the period that the Philippines was a United States possession.

Preserve the Natural Beauty of Wood

LEADRITE 25

Absolute Mold and Fungi Control

Preserve the natural beauty of your wooden furniture by providing them with the extreme protection from Leadrite - a highly effective formulation against mold and fungi infestation.

- Long Lasting
- Compatible to commonly used insecticides and adjuvants
- Safe to use and biodegradable



LEADS Environmental Health

Unit 1103 Paragon Plaza,
EDSA cor. Reliance St.,
Mandaluyong City

Tel. Nos.: 687-9010 • 687-7492
687-7942 • 687-2576
Fax No.: 687-0481
E-mail: info@leadsagri.com
fodegala@leadsagri.com
www.leadsagri.com

SSANGYONG Dream Price Deals, Dream Prize Thrills!

Owning your dream car has never been this easy! Take advantage of SsangYong's easy-financing schemes!

MODEL *	SRP	LOW FLOW DOWNTIME DEALS		LOW FLOW MONTHLY DEALS	
		Actual Down	Advance Monthly (72 mos.)	50% Down	Advance Monthly (72 mos.)
Rexton 2.7 XDi AT *	P 1,925,000	P 105,000	P 34,721	P 962,500	P 19,728
Stavic 2.7 XDi AT (11 Seater)	P 1,495,000	P 114,400	P 25,965	P 747,500	P 15,321

SsangYong has absorbed the impact of the reformed VAT and has specially formulated the above schemes just for you. Other deals also available.

EVERY PURCHASE OF A REXTON OR STAVIC WILL ALSO ENTITLE YOU TO:

- FREE PMS up to 30,000 kms. or 1 year, whichever comes first.
- A chance to win a trip for 2 to Paris!

Come and visit your nearest SsangYong dealer now! Trade-ins accepted.

*Other models & variants also available. **All deals are subject to bank approval. Promos runs from March 20 - May 31, 2006. Details sheet form 75, 2006. See flyers for details. Prc OTC-MCI Permit No. 7955 Series of 2006

SsangYong vehicles features:

- 3rd GENERATION CRDI ENGINE
- AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION
- SHIFT-ON-THE-FLY 4-WHEEL DRIVE
- 4WD (4WD MODE)
- 10-LINK REAR SUSPENSION (for all Ssang model)
- NOISE-REDUCTION INSULATION



DISTRIBUTED BY SSANGYONG AUTO PHILS. CORP.

APPROVED DEALERS: Whetstone Auto Mall Quezon City Tel. No. (02) 7211884, (02) 72118477, (02) 72118478, Fax No. (02) 8114042

SsangYong Quezon Ave. Tel. No. (02) 3723911, (02) 411304, (02) 4137242, Fax No. (02) 3724186 - SsangYong Parcadero Tel. No. (02) 9619578

UST GOES SOUTH!

New campus soon to rise in
Sta. Rosa, Laguna



Site Blessing of the
UST Sta. Rosa Campus on
Wednesday, April 19, 2006, 9:00 a.m.

Proud to be Thomasians at 400!

Pontifical and Royal
University of Santo Tomas
The Catholic University of the Philippines



Founded 1611

RP braces for shock ...

From page A1

Oil prices broke new ground above \$71 a barrel on Monday owing to mounting tensions over Iran's nuclear ambitions, fears of US gasoline shortages and rapid economic growth in China. (See *In the Know* below.)

Brent North Sea crude closed at \$71.46 a barrel. That was up 89 cents from Thursday's closing level in London, and just off a new high reached earlier Monday of \$71.62.

In New York, light sweet crude for May delivery surged \$1.08 from Thursday to close at \$70.40 a barrel, testing levels not seen since last summer.

Crude prices had last set a record in New York of \$70.85 on Aug. 30, after Hurricane Katrina hammered oil production facilities in the US Gulf of Mexico region.

Dubai crude, the benchmark for fuel prices in the country, surged to a record high of \$64.7 a barrel on Monday, boosting the April average to \$62.36 from \$57.82 in March.

Unleaded gasoline is now sold at \$83.50 a barrel and diesel at \$86.48 a barrel, according to Lotilla.

Prices to persist for a month

"While we are hoping that this will be a temporary phenomenon, nevertheless we have to prepare for any eventuality that it will persist for a month or two or longer," the energy secretary said.

In a statement, the Department of Energy (DOE) said President Macapagal-Arroyo had ordered government agencies to look for ways to make the surging oil prices more bearable for Filipinos.

The DOE is pushing oil firms to increase the number of gas stations offering P1-a-liter diesel discounts to the public transport sector.

At present, there are 366 gasoline stations all over the country that offer such discounts, including 194 in Metro Manila, 49 in Northern Luzon, 59 in Southern Luzon, 23 in the Visayas and 41 in Mindanao.

Other measures

Other mitigating measures include:

- Promoting the use of autogas (LPG) among taxi fleets and private vehicles to spur more gas stations to offer the fuel.
- Reducing temporarily the import tariffs slapped on crude and refined petroleum products.

• Planting of Jatropha whose seeds can be a source of biodiesel.

Ms Arroyo has given the Philippine National Oil Corp. (PNOC) the go-signal to enter into joint ventures with military camps in order to promote the planting of Jatropha.

PNOC Energy Development Corp. has already earmarked P1.6 million for planting Jatropha in its geothermal reservations.

The Jatropha Propagation Project, being undertaken in cooperation with the Dacongcocon Producers Cooperative Marketing Association and D1 Oils Asia Pacific Inc., aims to determine the agronomic requirements of the Jatropha species in the Philippines.

Substitute for diesel

PNOC-EDC said the plant's 37-percent oil content could be used as a substitute for diesel fuel.

Initially, the Jatropha plant will be planted on a 5-hectare property in Kabankalan City, Negros Occidental.

Lotilla said the President also directed the Department of Finance, the Bureau of Internal Revenue and the Bureau of Customs to finalize the revenue guidelines for the importation of ethanol, biofuel that has sugarcane, corn or cassava as raw materials.

"Because at current prices, ethanol can also bring down the pump price of gasoline when this is blended with gasoline," the energy secretary said.

To jump-start the country's bio-ethanol fuel program, the President on July 22, 2005 issued Executive Order No. 449, which would reduce the tariff on bio-ethanol imports from 10 percent to only 1 percent.

Covered by the tariff reduction are bio-ethanol imports that would be used for the government's Fuel Ethanol Program, as duly certified by the DOE.

Since the issuance of the EO, however, the government had yet to issue its implementing rules and regulations.

Local ethanol production is not expected to start until 2007.

Compressed natural gas

Lotilla said the Cabinet also agreed to review further the provisions of the proposed biodiesel law to determine incentives can be

given to vehicles, which can run on gasoline blended with 10 percent ethanol.

Another alternative transport fuel that the government is pushing is compressed natural gas (CNG).

The DOE said the Cabinet would ask the Shell group to proceed with the commercial operation of its mother-daughter stations in the country.

Safety issues continued to prevent Shell Philippines Exploration BV (SPEX) and Philippines Shell Petroleum Corp. from starting commercial operations of their mother-daughter CNG refilling stations, based on the two firms' own assessments.

Mario Marasigan, DOE energy utilization and management bureau director, earlier said that the Shell group should submit by the end of the month a crucial report that would pave the way for the start of operations of CNG-fed buses on the Batangas-Manila-Batangas route.

He related that the DOE had already completed its own inspections of Shell's mother-daughter CNG refilling stations, but it had yet to

receive a formal report from the Shell Group.

The results of Shell's own tests on the mother-daughter stations, which would have to be submitted to the DOE for concurrence, were crucial to the start of commercial operations of these stations, he said.

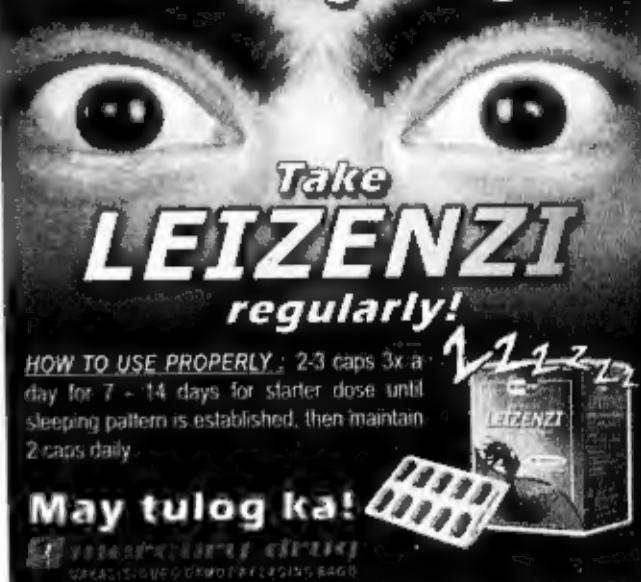
Mr Arroyo also ordered PNOC to explore alternative arrangements with other private investors for the construction of additional mother-daughter stations.

Cost-cutting

In the power sector, the government, through the National Power Corp. would be implementing stringent cost-cutting measures, with particular emphasis on using less oil-based power plants and shifting to those that ran on fuels such as hydro, geothermal and natural gas.

In the March 5-11 period, the country's generation mix showed an increased use of renewable energy at 26 percent in Luzon, 89.3 percent in the Visayas, and 83 percent in Mindanao. With a report from AFP

Dilat kuwago sa gabi?



HOW TO USE PROPERLY: 2-3 caps 3x-a-day for 7-14 days for starter dose until sleeping pattern is established, then maintain 2 caps daily.

Take LEIZENZI regularly!

Take

Filipinos' English proficiency waning, says survey

WHILE MOST FILIPINOS BELIEVE GOOD ENGLISH communication skills lead to better job opportunities, national proficiency in English has declined over the last 12 years, a recent nationwide survey by the Social Weather Stations showed. This is compared to previous SWS surveys in December 1993 and September 2000.

The March 2006 survey showed that two out of three Filipino adults (65 percent) understood spoken and written English, while about half (48

percent) said they could write in English. A third (32 percent) said they spoke English, while 27 percent said they thought in English. Some 14 percent said they were not competent in any way when it came to the English language.

In the 1993 and 2000 surveys, three of four Filipino adults said they understood spoken and written English. Three of five said they could write in English, while more than half said they spoke English. Two-fifths said they thought in English while only 7 percent said they were not competent in any

way when it came to the language.

The March 2006 survey also found that more than half of Filipinos (68 percent) agreed that developing good English communication skills opened up better job opportunities for them. Net agreement was higher in Metro Manila and the rest of Luzon, in urban rather than in rural areas, among the upper rather than the lower classes, and among those who had more education.

Self-assessed English proficiency was higher in Metro Manila than in other areas, in urban rather than rural areas, among upper than lower

classes, among younger than older age groups, and among those with higher education.

The personal use of English had likewise declined in March 2006 compared to September 2000, with 19 percent saying they had almost no use for the English language, compared to 10 percent in 2000.

The SWS Survey for the First Quarter of 2006 was conducted on March 8-14 with face-to-face interviews of 1,200 adults divided into random samples of 300 each in Metro Manila, the rest of Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao, with a sampling error margin of plus or minus 3 for national percentages and plus or minus 6 for area percentages.

The survey results were released a day after President Macapagal-Arroyo advised schoolteachers to watch the American children's educational TV show "Sesame Street" to relearn the basics of the English language, during her visit to the National Educators Academy of the Philippines on Monday.

The latest survey was commissioned by the Promoting English Proficiency (PEP) Project (www.promote-english.org), an initiative of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines and the Makati Business Club, with funding from Philip Morris Philippines Manufacturing Inc.

The additional question on English proficiency and job opportunities was broached by the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and EON The Stakeholder Relations Firm's English is Cool campaign (www.english-is-cool.org), co-sponsored by the Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce.

For inquiries on the PEP project, the PEP secretariat may be reached at tel. 885-7867, ext. 485, or e-mail pep@sun.com.ph. Inquiries on the English is Cool campaign may be directed through the ECCP office at tel. 759-6680 or info@english-is-cool.org. Rate Pedroso, PDI Research

Students, teachers told: Shun 'Taglish'

AS A RESULT OF THE Social Weather Stations survey showing a decline in English proficiency among Filipinos, the Department of Education is discouraging teachers and students from using "Taglish" but instead to speak correct English inside as well as outside the classroom. (See story at left)

DepEd Officer-in-Charge Fe Hidalgo said the use of Taglish had contributed to the decline in English proficiency among Filipinos, pointing to the recent SWS survey.

She said learning correct English would make Filipinos bilingual and increase their chances of making it in a globalized world.

But she said the national language must not be ignored.

"I don't think our national language [should] take a back seat because our own language is very important," Hidalgo said.

The survey was commissioned by the Promoting English Proficiency (PEP) project of the American Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines and the Makati Business Club.

But believing that two languages were better than one, a multinational cooperative yesterday kicked off a five-year campaign for bilingualism, which seeks to promote English proficiency without undermining the vernacular.

English is Cool

Aiming to strip English of its elitist cloak, the European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines (ECCP) and EON The Stakeholder Relations Firm, launched "English is Cool," a campaign to encourage the Filipino youth to "super-size your opportunities" by fluently speaking, writing and even thinking in English.

"The campaign is not about English versus Tagalog (Filipino), but that two is better than one. Knowing two languages offers better job opportunities. We are in this campaign because we believe it's time to reinvest in developing English. It is the competitive advantage of the Philippines," said Henry Schumacher, ECCP executive vice president.

The campaign, a click away on its website www.english-is-cool.org, is backed by the Ayala Young Leaders Congress, the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, PEP Hands on Manila and Far Eastern University.

"English is the language of the world, of business, the Internet, even government exams — The world has become a very small global village, and as I always tell our students, they were born into the language and they should not throw it away," said FEU president Lydia Balatbat-Echauz.

Within a five-year period, the campaign seeks to "reverse the decline in national English proficiency" by reviving its usage among the youth and those around them, and promoting the language as "a value-adding skill that is available to everyone." Tarryn V. Quijano, Alcuin Pe

BLUE BOZ WATER TREATMENT TECHNOLOGY
Your Strategic Business for Water Station Business

PHP 295,000
AVAIL INSTALLMENT PLAN PROMO

OTHER PRODUCTS & SERVICES
•Made to order stickers
•Reverse Osmosis Membranes
•Water & Motors
•UV Sterilizers & Ozonators
•Filters & Cartridges
•Upgrading of System
•Safe Water for a Better Life

FOR INQUIRIES, CALL:
634-8542 / 6341207
LOOK FOR MR. NESTOR ILAGAN
VISIT US AT: www.bluebozwater.com
Unit 107 Park Royal Condominium, Jado St., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
ONE STOP SHOP FOR ALL YOUR WATER STORE NEEDS!

SUPER LOW PRICE
RESORTS & LARGE POOLS

RESIDENTIAL P338,000 PACKAGE

SHIELDS
POOL & SPA

PHONE MANILA
• 826-5746
• 826-4197
• 829-8433

NOW OPEN FOR OVERSEAS FRANCHISE

CARONY TRANSPORT WHEEL CHAIR SYSTEM

WHEELCHAIR & AUTO SEAT IN ONE

ELIMINATES NEED TO LIFT THE PHYSICALLY CHALLENGED IN AND OUT OF VEHICLE

MADE IN SWEDEN

CAROSPEED HAND-OPERATED ACCELERATOR

EXCLUSIVELY DISTRIBUTED BY
PBC CAR ADAPT, INCORPORATED
Tel. No.: (632) 671-7277 / (632) 671-8481
Mobile: (0915) 900-2092

ALSO AVAILABLE
CAROLIFT
Hoists for manual and power wheelchairs and scooters

SOLAR

WIND

ENERGY

SOLAR ELECTRIC COMPANY INC.

MANILA OFFICE
Annapolis Wilshire Plaza
11 Annapolis St., Greenhills,
San Juan, Metro Manila
Tel. no.: (632) 734-4512/725-4322/7274-0213
Fax: (632) 734-0223
e-mail: solarelectric@piltdsl.net

ILOILO OFFICE
Lopez Arcade
E. Lopez St., Iloilo City
Tel. no.: (033) 320-0368 & 503-3124
Fax: (033) 320-0368
e-mail: solarelectric@globalines.com.ph

Visit our website: www.solarelectric.com.ph

Organize Your Office Today.

Crowd Control Barrier
TENSABARRIER
A versatile tool for directing the flow of people in banks, airports, restaurants, and other high foot traffic areas.

Office Furniture

Arch Lever File

PAPER SHREDDERS

CHAIRS

Office Filing Drawer Cabinet

DEXTERTON

The First and the Biggest Ostrich Farm in the Philippines
Established 1996. Accredited by the PAWB-DENR, BAI-DA and NMIC-DA

OSTRICH CHICKS
2-3 WEEK OLD
P8,000.00 per head
FOB Cagayan de Oro City

Big Bird

Also available Juveniles and Breeders.

We also sell Big Bird Ostrich Meat, Ostrich Eggshells and Ostrich Leather/Leather Products.

For more information, please call:
PHILIPPINE OSTRICH & CROCODILE FARMS, INC.
Limketkai Corporate Office, Cagayan de Oro City
Phone: +63(88)857-5988
e-mail: port@ostrich.com.ph
www.ostrich.com.ph

FOR ALL YOUR AUTO REPAIR AND SERVICE NEEDS...

NAME IT! WE'VE GOT IT!

Anson Auto Service Center

LOWEST PRICE YOU EXPECT IN THE TIME YOU WANT

DRIVE IN FOR A CHECK-UP!

SEE THE DIFFERENCE AND FEEL THE RESULTS.

ALL MAJOR CREDIT CARDS ACCEPTED

ANSON CENTER, A. ARNAIZ AVENUE (FORMERLY PASAY ROAD), CORNER WEST DRIVE, MAKATI CITY
8822212 • 8822213 • 8822214
8867552 • 8867551

OPEN MONDAY TO SUNDAY

A. ARNAIZ AVE. (FORMERLY PASAY ROAD)
THIS WAY

ANSON AUTO SERVICE CENTER
PARKING

ATM
THIS WAY

PARKING
THIS WAY

PARK SQUARE 2

Trusted name since 1986

PDI GENERICS

Less 20% discount for Senior Citizens

Suggested Retail Price Feb. 28, 2006 • Makatitpid ng higit sa 80%

	DLI	Leading Brand	Savings		
Analgesic/Antipyretic (Para sa kirot, lagnat o trangkas)					
DLI Mefenamic Acid tab. 500 mg	✓	2.00	18.85/bot		
DLI Paracetamol syrup 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml	✓	6.00	37.50/bot		
DLI Paracetamol tab 500 mg	✓	0.70	1.75/bot		
Anti-biotic (Kontra-Baktery)					
DLI Amoxicillin cap. 250 mg	✓	3.00	8.85		
DLI Amoxicillin cap. 500 mg	✓	4.40	11.35/cap		
DLI Amoxicillin susp. 250 mg/5 ml. 60 ml	✓	7.70	14.00		
DLI Ampicillin cap. 500 mg	✓	3.70	14.15		
DLI Chloramphenicol cap. 500 mg	✓	2.70	34.05/cap		
DLI Co-trimoxazole tab. (TM-160mg SMZ-800mg)	✓	2.50	26.00		
DLI Co-trimoxazole cap. (TM-80mg SMZ-400mg)	✓	1.70	23.30/cap		
DLI Co-trimoxazole susp. (TM-40mg SMZ-200mg)	✓	115.75	84.75/bot		
Anti-cough (Para sa Ubo)					
DLI Bromhexine HCL syrup 4 mg/5 ml. 60 ml	✓	30.00	74.76		
DLI Carbocisteine cap. 500 mg	✓	2.50	9.75/cap		
DLI Carbocisteine susp. 500 mg/5 ml. 60 ml	✓	29.00	87.26		
Anti-diarrhea (Para sa Paglatas)					
DLI Loperamide cap. 2 mg	✓	1.30	8.95/cap		
Mahibili ng sumusunod na sa mga botikilang abot-kaya sa haging					
Quality na gamot, sa presyo ng mas abot!!!					
Watsons	EMILENE	Roxie Pharmacy	Carbo Superdrug	COMMANDER	WATSONS
Phone: 859-1000, 859-1070	Phone: 859-0000, 859-0080				

For factory prices visit www.PDI-Generics.com for complete product & price information. If out of stock, call 711-3833, 712-4888, 743-1036

Worried?
Depressed?
Jobless?

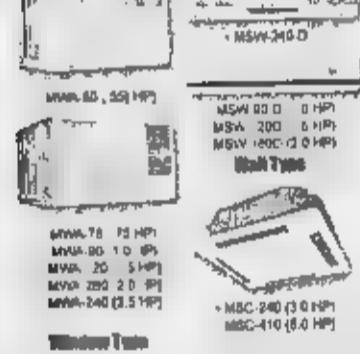
JobCentralAsia.com

CALL THE INQUIRER CUSTOMER SERVICE HOTLINE
0917-666-9688

Marks of Canada

OF CANADA

AIR-CONDITIONERS

BY THE WORLD'S
TOP 2
AIR CONDITIONER MANUFACTURER

FEATURES:

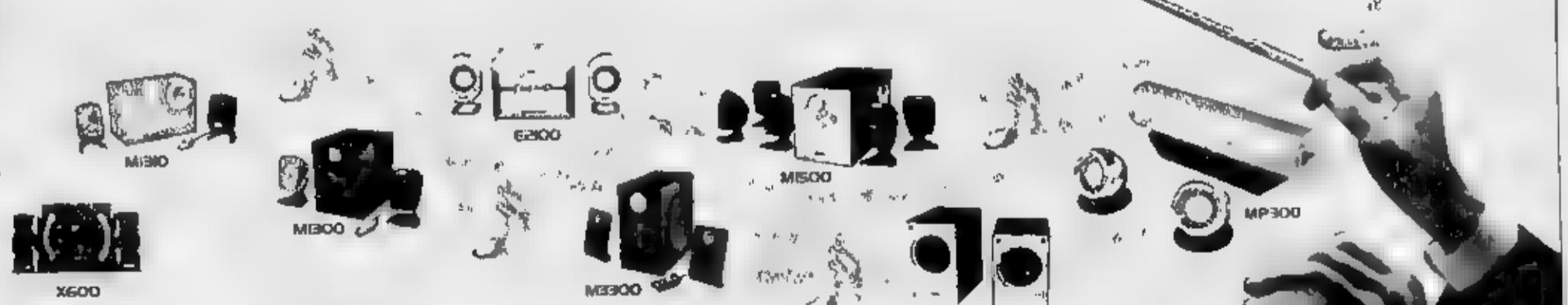


Continental Sales Inc.

The Best Home Entertainment Store in the Philippines
Authorized by Edifier International Limited and its Distributors
in the Philippines, Marks of Canada is the only authorized distributor of Edifier products in the Philippines.

www.edifier.com.ph

A Musical Masterpiece at Work.



Edifier

THE AUDIO ARTIST

In tune with the way you listen.

For Sales Inquiries: Manila (02) 7248096 • E-mail: bld_sales@banbros.ph Cebu (032) 4227760-65 • E-mail: sales@banbroscebu.com. AVAILABLE AT SELECTED COMPUTER RETAIL STORES NATIONWIDE

Send resumes instantly

Visit us at
www.jobmarketstation.com

WE'VE GOT THE PERFECT SOLUTION
TO YOUR NEEDS.

• Heavy-duty collapsible
tents. Best for construction
sites or as warehouses with
sidings.

• OTHER PRODUCTS.
• AWNINGS & CANOPIES • GARDEN / PARTY TENTS • CAMPING TENTS
• PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT • EVENT TENTS & STAGE RENTALS

TENTHAWS
2F Makati III Bldg. 279 Alabang-Zapote
Road Paranaque 1634 Las Piñas City
FAX: 872-3332 E-mail: tenthaws88@yahoo.com

LAS PIÑAS CITY QUEZON CITY
872-3788 - 872-8057 27 KAMIAS 922-0432
AFTER OFFICE HOURS: 876-5411

NEW

Soon to dominate the skyline
MAKATI EXECUTIVE TOWER III
Glyndor Square, San. Gil Peñalosa Ave., Pio Del Pilar, Makati City
40-storey Office, Commercial & Residential Condominium
Own a unit for as low as
9,773 /mo.

Amenities: Swimming Pool
Children's Playground
Function Room / Gym
Sauna for men & women
Laundromat space (for lease)
Drying Area / Foot Deck
Viewing Deck / Logging Deck
24-Hour Association Security

012-2222 243-6545 818-8888 241-1834 | www.cityland.net investment@cityland.net

From the nation's No. 1 Newspaper:
INQUIRER

Read it every Sunday
with the
Philippine Daily Inquirer.

JOB
Market

JOB
100% GUARANTEED

idac
AIR CONDITIONING
The New Split Type Aircon

Wall-Mounted 1hp-P16,500

1.5hp-P18,500 2hp-P23,000 1.5hp-P20,000

Floor Mounted 3hp-P38,500 5hp-P55,000

Free Installation!

Call: 2432610, 2414731

Available@MC Fort, Makati & Ortigas

Cebu (032) 3465498 Davao: (082) 2355821

iWATA TIME RECODER

Durable & Reliable
MORE THAN 20 YEARS IN THE MARKET NOWCall Direct Number:
COLENT ENTERPRISE CO.

Tel. 012-4317 742-8115 742-8116 (to Davao) 011-8286 to 94

Fax 012-2308 colent@idol.netP-9,800
E-2A
2Color Printing
Med for site
Block for Football
Operate during
Breaks etc.
P7,800P-9,000
Electric Timer
with Internal
optional large
elements & Window
Automatic Adjustment
P15,900
STAMPING MACHINE
FOR AUTOMATIC
TIME, DATE,
AM, PM, TIME AND
COMPANY NAMEP-10,700
MD-1000
P-16,700
Centralized 30200ips
Thermal printer
Call 012-2308
011-8286 to 94
Fax 012-2308COLENT ENTERPRISE CO.
Tel. 012-4317 742-8115 742-8116 (to Davao) 011-8286 to 94
Fax 012-2308 colent@idol.netP-11,800
ONLY
P-19,500
ONLY
P-20,000
ONLY
P-15,000
ONLYRECOR
MDR FT-3012
BEST FOR BUSINESS

PARTS & SUPPLIES AVAILABLE FOR MOST COPIER MODELS.

COPYTRADE

Copystar 800 110 MF Johnson St. Samaligan Manila, Bataan, Ncr, Philippines

Tel. 047-740-8556 047-740-8557 047-740-8558

Fax 047-747-3472 748-8316

www.copytrade.com.ph

HAVE A SMASHING SUMMER!

Stay cool

VERNON TAPILLA'S
COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS
and THE WRITING INSTITUTE

BIG DISCOUNT PRICES

The Success & Confidence Building Program

On Speech Improvement, Effective

Sell Presentations & Personality Development

On Grammar & Conversational English

On Public Speaking & Leadership Training

On Business & Technical Writing

On Features & Creative Writing

On Speech Grammar, Public Speaking,

Confidence Building, Personality Dev?

+ Reading and Comprehension for Kids

PRIVATE TUTORING & CORPORATE TRAINING ARE AVAILABLE

Makati - 892-9502 892-9503 ALABANG - 845-0806

By the Sea Beach Hotel and Restaurant

Your Summer Home Away from Home

• Company Outings

• Social & Corporate Events

• Conventions & Meetings

REASONABLE OVERNIGHT ROOM RATES:

Regular 1,200.00

Bayside 1,500.00

Garden 2,500.00

Seafront/Executive 2,800.00

Double Deluxe 3,400.00

Suite 3,850.00

Vacation Villa-3 bedroom house 7,600.00

For inquiries call Tel. No. (047) 222-4580 222-2808 223-4346

Tel. Fax No. 047-722-77-8 727-2895

Email: bythesea@grande.com.phWeb: <http://www.bystthesea.com.ph>

OLASALO

Lawyer tags Abalos election fraud brains

From page A1

Sen. Loren Legarda in her election protest against Vice President Nicanor de Castro, said Abalos knew all along what Garcillano was doing to ensure the victory of President Macapagal-Arroyo and De Castro.

"Garcillano was not the principal author of the cheating. It was Abalos all along. Garcillano served only as the point man," Brillantes told the Inquirer in a phone interview.

He said the vote-rigging operations were uncovered through the "Hello Garcí" tapes, which supposedly contained wiretapped conversations between the President and Garcillano.

Abalos said he was studying the possibility of filing a libel or slander case against Brillantes.

"He must face the case and if he has the evidence to back up his accusation, he better reveal it. Otherwise, if he can't prove his claim, he will be liable," Abalos said over daMM radio.

Destabilization

Abalos said the resurrection of the accusations against the election body was part of the "destabilization" plot of Ms Arroyo's opponents.

The opposition has claimed that Ms Arroyo directed Garcillano to ensure that she gets a winning margin of at least 1 million votes over movie actor Fernando Poe Jr. Ms Arroyo has denied stealing the presidential election.

The alleged cheating was among the issues contained in the impeachment complaint the opposition filed against Ms Arroyo last year. The administration-dominated House of Representatives, however, quashed the complaint.

Under the Constitution, impeachment proceedings against the President can be initiated only once a year.

Brillantes said he was advised by House Minority Leader Francis Escudero to initiate the impeachment of Abalos in July, in time for

the filing of another impeachment complaint by the opposition against the President, because the two cases were connected.

6 letters

Brillantes said he had written Abalos "six times already" asking him to resign, to no avail.

The first time he wrote Abalos, Brillantes said, was when the Comelec chair confirmed the statement of election lawyer Romulo Macalintala, and Presidential Adviser on Politics Affairs Gabby Claudio that Ms Arroyo had won the presidential election based on the Comelec copy of the votes even before Congress had started canvassing the votes for President and Vice President.

Abalos had always maintained that he based his announcement on the Comelec's canvassing of election returns (ERs) for the senatorial slate, which also contained the results for the presidential and vice presidential races. The ERs were based on precinct tallies.

Unprecedented

Brillantes said what Abalos did was unprecedented. "In the country's election history, no Comelec chair has ever announced the result of the presidential race before the canvass by Congress even began; Comelec never had a say in the presidential canvass."

Since his premature declaration, Abalos said he had found himself in the eye of a storm.

"What I did was only to back up the legitimacy of the President, whom Congress, not Comelec, proclaimed the winner," he said.

Free hand in Mindanao

Abalos, who has consistently claimed that Garcillano acted alone and that the latter's alleged illegal acts never affected the outcome of the election, challenged Brillantes and other Comelec critics to file a case in the election body or in court.

Brillantes said Garcillano was given a free hand in Mindanao, especially in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (AR-

MM) where cheating was reported to have been most widespread and massive.

"Garcillano can't have manipulated the election all by himself. Abalos claimed he did nothing wrong but the fact that he allowed Garcillano to do as he liked in Mindanao makes him (Abalos) equally guilty," he said.

The lawyer recalled that shortly after Garcillano's appointment in early 2004, Abalos named him commissioner in charge (CIC) of Central Mindanao (which covered the ARMM because there was no ARMM regional office at the time).

As election day neared and because of the protest of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., Abalos reassigned Garcillano as CIC of the Southern Tagalog and Bicol regions.

Brillantes said Abalos designated himself CIC of Mindanao but Garcillano was also made CIC for administrative matters, thus giving the latter power over Comelec and Comelec-deputized persons, in Mindanao.

Moreover, Abalos was also CIC of the National Capital Region and his duties as chair confined him to Metro Manila.

"Thus was Garcillano able to dictate the conduct of the elections in Mindanao as evidenced by the phone calls he made [that were allegedly recorded] in the 'Hello Garcí' tapes and it was impossible that Abalos did not know about this," Brillantes said.

Transfer of Gudam

The lawyer said Garcillano's influence was evident in the transfer of Marine Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudam, who was suddenly removed from his post as head of security for the two Lanao provinces on May 12, when the canvassing was still going on.

Abalos earlier confirmed Garcillano's action but said the commissioner did it on his own without prior approval from the Comelec en banc. He said Gudam violated a regulation prohibiting the

reassignment of government personnel during the election period.

Brillantes said Abalos's alleged complicity in the election irregularities was the reason the Comelec's own investigation of the "Hello Garcí" scandal remained to be concluded.

The lawyer also echoed the political opposition's contention that the certificates of canvass had been tampered with. He said the ERs would prove that cheating took place.

"If they had not been doctored yet, the original ERs that are in the Comelec's possession would show the discrepancies," Brillantes said. "Those ERs are now the best evidence we have of the cheating."

Legarda said there was no question that both the presidential and the vice presidential contests were marred by fraud.

Video

Legarda said ABS-CBN's exclusive footage on how election documents in the custody of Congress were tampered with last year provided additional proof.

The tape, which the TV network aired last night and on Holy Wednesday, featured an interview with people who claimed to have personal knowledge of the video, which detailed how genuine election returns were substituted with fake documents right on the premises of the House of Representatives.

Legarda described the switching of ERs as a "brazen cover-up" of election irregularities.

She said the video supported empirical evidence showing that the Lanao del Sur ERs, which came from Congress, had been falsified and substituted for the real documents as part of a scheme to rob the nation of its true, duly elected leaders.

Whitewash

Reacting to Speaker Jose de Venecia's statement that a House

investigation yielded no evidence of ER tampering, Legarda said: "That was a whitewash because the empirical evidence was the switching of election returns in the ballots."

She said the figures on the returns from the ballot boxes that were earlier placed under the custody of the House of Representatives were different from the carbon copies of the returns intended for the Comelec and the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections.

Brillantes agreed with Legarda, saying "JDV does not know anything about it but if he said that there is no evidence of switching, then I would say that he might be in on the conspiracy."

No part of scheme

Legarda said De Castro was also part of the grand scheme to deprive her of victory.

"At this point in time, it is no longer in question that De Castro had a big part in the election irregularities from which he benefited immensely by holding office illegitimately," she said.

UN honors RP soldier who was killed in Haiti

From page A1

On April 11, the world body awarded the UN Peacekeeping Medal to 165 members of the Philippine contingent serving in Liberia.

And on April 7, UN Special Service medals were given to five members of the Philippine National Police currently deployed in East Timor.

Largest troop contributor

These were the latest citations earned by the country, now the "largest troop contributor" to UN peacekeeping operations from Southeast Asia, the DFA said.

More than 500 Filipino soldiers and police officers are now serving under the UN flag in Haiti, Liberia and East Timor, as well as in Afghanistan, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Kosovo and Sudan.

The Philippines began contributing troops to the UN and Korea in 1950 and, since then, has participated in over 20 peacekeeping missions, including those in Vietnam, the Congo, Sierra Leone, Iraq, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Batomalaque will receive the Dag Hammarskjöld Medal (given in memory of the former UN secretary general) when the UN marks the International Day of Peacekeepers on May 29, accord-

ing to Ambassador Lauro Baja Jr., the country's permanent representative to the UN.

Part of the 135-member Philippine contingent in Haiti, the officer was shot dead by Haitian gunmen during an encounter in the violent slums of Soleil in Port-au-Prince. The Scout Ranger was then providing cover fire for a superior officer when he was shot.

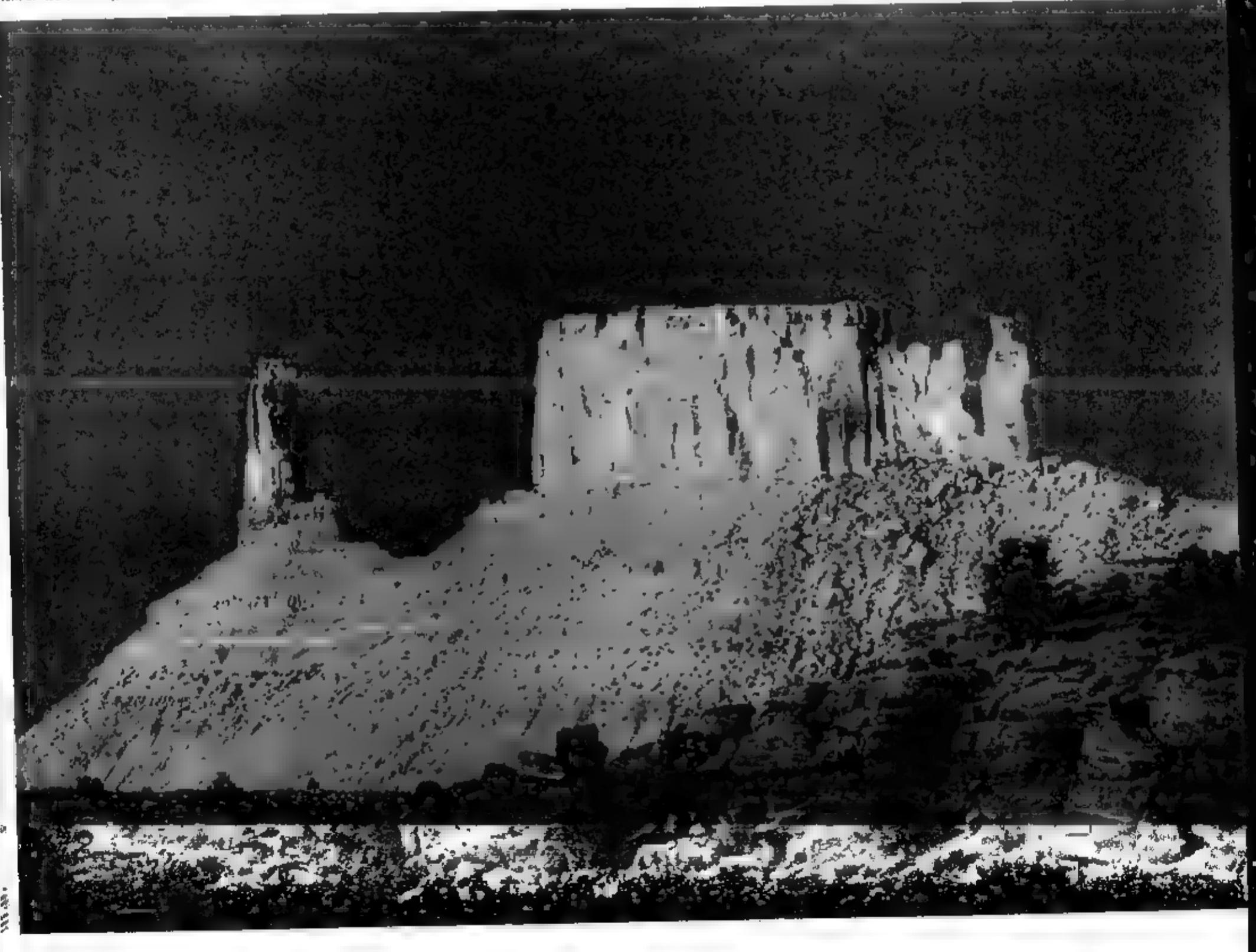
Valor like WWII soldiers

In Monrovia, Liberia, the 165 Philippine peacekeepers received the award from UN special representative Aam Doss. Baja said in a separate report to the DFA.

Doss said he considered the Filipino troops as being driven by the "same valor" displayed by their elder comrades in World War II, noting that the Philippines marked Araw ng Kagitingan a few days earlier on April 9.

In Dili, East Timor, the following PNP personnel received UN decorations in ceremonies held at their Obregón barracks: Contingent commander Edgar Layon, professional ethics advisors Pedro de los Reyes and Jose Molava Duenas, and border patrol advisers Joseph Pangilinan and Celso Destajo.

Government Warning: Cigarette s



Bunye's 2 wishes for Erap: RP now world's top exporter of nurses

From page A1
cebrates his 69th birthday today, it would be unity for the Filipino nation and for President Macapagal-Arroyo to sign Executive Order No 464.

The controversy, EO 464 bars executive branch officials from appearing in congressional hearings.

Also celebrating his 61st birthday today is Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye who also had two wishes for the former President: Good health and good looks.

"Sana ay patuloy na mag-improve yung kanyang katusugan at hangad natin na patuloy siya mag-improve. (We hope his health continues to improve and we wish he continues to look handsome)," Bunye said.

Estrada, in a brief interview yesterday, said he did not have any personal wishes for his birthday. He simply wanted Filipinos to learn the truth about the numerous scandals rocking the Arroyo administration.

"I want people to know what really happened in the 'Hello Garcia' controversy, the fertilizer scam and other issues. We cannot move forward without the truth," the former leader said.

Estrada, who is in his fifth year of detention, is facing plunder and perjury charges before the Sandiganbayan Special Division trial at 9 a.m.

Political VIPs invited to attend Estrada's birthday Mass were former President Corazon Aquino, Ms. Arroyo's half-sister Cielo Macapaga, and Susan Roces, widow of the late Fernando Poe Jr.

National Capital Region Police Office (NCRPO) chief Director Vil

dal Querol said some 200 cops would be deployed to secure the former President during the Mass and when he proceeds to the Sandiganbayan.

As in previous hearings, Querol said the police had not received any information that Estrada's life was under threat.

No rallies in church

The parish priest of St Peter's Church made one request—for the police and Estrada's supporters not to turn the church into a political arena.

"Estrada's allies and well-wishers are expected to attend [Mass in the morning]. I just want to remind them about the request of the parish priest—not to hold rallies or bring banners inside the church," Querol said.

The police also expected supporters to hold a vigil at the church last night.

Greetings from Chavit

Former Manila City Prosecutor Jose Flaminio said Estrada would continue to bequeath allegations that he received "jueteng" money from Jocos Sur Gov't's "Chavit" Singson.

Singson, for his part, wished Estrada well on his birthday. The two used to be best of friends.

"I wish him well on his 69th birthday. I wish him discernment or insight so he can see how things could be better for him and for our country. It is only in recognizing where one erred that one can improve himself," Singson said.

He added that Estrada should realize by now that he could no longer be president again.

"He can only be president once. The Constitution does not have a provision for reelection. He had the presidency but he screwed it up. If he thinks he could regain his power after everything he did to the country, he is wrong. It's not only illegal, it's also impossible," Singson said.

By Christian V. Esquerra

THE UNABATED DEPARTURE OF Filipino health professionals for better opportunities abroad has given the country a new, albeit not exactly enviable, title: The world's top exporter of nurses.

From her recent study, Dr. Pely Lorenzo of the University of the Philippines National Institute of Health made the pronouncement yesterday at a meeting seeking to arrest what was described as a worsening brain drain.

"The Philippines is now the biggest health service provider of overseas nurses globally," she said at the forum attended by top health officials, including from the World Health Organization.

Since 1994, more than 100,000 nurses have left the country, more than 50,000 from 2000 to 2003 alone according to Dr. Fernando

Sanchez, executive director of the Association of Philippine Medical Colleges.

Lorenzo said most of the nurses went to Saudi Arabia (57 percent), the United States (14 percent) and the United Kingdom (12 percent).

The rest went to Libya, United Arab Emirates, Ireland, Singapore, Kuwait, Brunei, Japan and the Nordic countries, Lorenzo said.

Rural hospitals feel shortage

Sanchez said the continued exodus of local professionals, particularly nurses, had been seriously felt in the countryside.

There were no more nurses in three hospitals in Surigao del Norte, Lanao del Sur and Sulu and in two others in Isabela, he said.

Two hospitals in Zamboanga del Sur could not operate new wards for lack of nurses, he said. "In rural areas in the Philip-

pines are, in fact, vulnerable to health and human resources deficiencies," said Sanchez.

When it hits big cities...

Dr. Jean Mak Olive, WHO country representative, said Filipinos would most likely feel the urgency of the problem only if it "hits the big cities where the politicians are."

"It's not reaching the big cities yet, but if you go to the rural areas, you'll see the problem there," he said.

Olive said an official of Silliman University, one of the top nursing institutions in the country, had complained about the imminent departure of 17 of the school's "best teachers." It has a teaching staff of 87.

460 nursing schools

If it's any consolation, Lorenzo said the country was producing more than enough nurses to make up for those leaving for

abroad.

Every year, the 460 nursing schools in the country graduate between 15,000 and 25,000 nurses, she said.

"We don't have a shortage as far as nurses are concerned because we produce more than we need," she said. "We have a shortage in skilled and experienced nurses."

Sanchez's study noted that the Philippine General Hospital, which used to accept only the top 10 percent of nursing school graduates, has been forced to "lower its standards by hiring nurses who just make the minimum passing mark."

"It is not so much that there is a lack of applicants, but the top nursing graduates are no longer applying," he said. "They are already leaving for abroad. The PGH loses 300 to 500 nurses of their 2,000-strong health work force every year."

POEA restricts deployment of pilots overseas

By Jerome Aning

THE PHILIPPINE OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT Administration has restricted the deployment of pilots and aircraft mechanics abroad to prevent disruption in the local aviation industry.

POEA Administrator Rosalinda Baldos said that effective April 1, pilots and aircraft mechanics should inform their local employers six months in advance of their intention to work abroad.

The application papers must carry a certification from the employers that a resigning worker had complied with the six-month prior notice rule.

This way, the operations of our local aviation industry would not be jeopardized, Baldos explained to reporters.

Under the Labor Code, employees must give at least a one-month notice to their employers.

However, according to Emmanuel Gestana, a consultant for several Manila-based recruitment agencies, pilots are often direct

recruited and hired.

"Pilots usually do not bother going through recruitment agencies. They can actually resign and leave anytime," he told the Inquirer.

Filipino pilots and airline mechanics are lured abroad by the high salaries ranging from P40,000 to P100,000 a month.

Review in other sectors

The POEA has also conducted an evaluation of the labor supply and demand situation in the education and communications sectors.

The agency has consulted with government, regulating and licensing agencies to determine which of the so-called "mission critical industries" are facing a manpower shortage of workers.

Baldos said POEA used a formula that takes into account the current supply of labor, the need of prospective workers and the local demand.

He explained that the local supply or the inventory of qualified employees for any industry would be determined by data

provided by the licensing authority on prospective entrants, the number of those applying for licensure, and the average passing rate for a particular license.

Also, a 20-percent buffer—the regular standard used in industry inventories—would be added to the total local demand. Baldos said an industry demand with less than 20 percent corresponding supply of workers would be considered critical, she said.

No to total ban

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas earlier rejected demands by some industry groups that the government impose a total deployment ban on workers in agriculture, health care and education to stop what they described as a hemorrhage of critical skills.

Sto. Tomas said an outright ban could be "constitutionally problematic" since it would violate a person's right to work wherever he or she wanted to.

"Banning a worker from leaving

his or her firm might be construed as involuntary servitude and the courts would surely just issue a restraining order against it if someone complained," she said.

Remedial measures needed

Industry groups in the three sectors warned that unless remedial measures were instituted soon, some of the country's vital industries and services could ground to a halt.

They said that under Section 5 of Republic Act No 8042 or the Migrant Workers Act of 1995, the state has the power to suspend or ban the deployment of certain critical skills and talents "in pursuance of national interest or when public welfare so requires."

Section 31 of the same law states that the government shall provide professionals and other highly skilled OFWs with "adequate incentives and programs so as to secure their services in priority development areas of the public and private sectors."

Come to Marlboro Country.

smoking is dangerous to your health



Publisher MAGANI TAMBOT
 Editor in Chief LETTY JIMENEZ-MARAVAN
 Managing Editor JOSE MA. D. MOLASCO
 Associate Editor AVELARDO S. ULMARAY
 Associate Editor for Readership RICARDO A. GARCILLANO
 News Editor ARISTOBAL T. ENGRACIA JR. - Chief News Desk NELIO B. PASCUAL
 Opinion Editor JORGE V. ABUTA

National Editor PENGANTINO B. BENIMETRE JR.
 Senior Desk Editor JUAN V. SARMENTO JR.
 Editorial Consultant Amando Doronila
 Chief Photographer ERNE U. SARMENTO
 Art & Design Director LYNETT A. VILLABRAS

Board Chairman MARIO R. PIRES
 President ALEXANDRA PIRES-ROMALDEZ
 Executive Vice President DAVID Q. VALDES
 Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing RENATO R. PIMENTEL
 VP for Advertising FELIPE R. OLARTE
 AVP for Circulation GLORIA P. LAROCZABAL

Readers' Advocate LOIMA KALAY TINDO
readersadvocate@inquirercn.com.ph • Tel. No. 897-4808, Loc. 347

All rights reserved. Except as provided by law, no part of this Philippine Daily Inquirer may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, stored in a database or retrieval system, without its prior written permission.

Stealth bomb

FROM JULY TO SEPTEMBER LAST YEAR, THE fact-finding board headed by Vice Adm. Mateo Mayuga listened to "resource persons," leading to expectations that upon the scheduled completion of its investigation in October last year, the public would be informed of its findings. The report, however, was submitted in January, a month after Mayuga had been promoted to commander of the Philippine Navy.

EDITORIAL. The release of the findings in April means that it took six months longer than expected to reach the public. And when the report was finally released, it was deliberately downplayed. A series of notifications to the press was timed to coincide with the beginning of the Holy Week holidays.

The report, Mayuga explained, was not meant to summarize the inquiry into allegations that some officers and men of the Armed Forces of the Philippines played a role in electoral irregularities. Instead, the report focuses on what can be done concerning the AFP's future role in elections.

But the fact remains that the fact-finding board was convened in the wake of shocking accusations that top military officers were involved in electoral fraud. And the report itself has come down in favor of the senior officers accused of participating in cheating for the benefit of President Macapagal-Arroyo in May 2004. Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon, Southern Command chief Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon, retired Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko and retired Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani were all mentioned in the controversial "Hello, Garcí" recordings and have all been cleared by the Mayuga report.

Two of the three generals who've been cleared—Esperon and Habacon—are not only controversial but also clearly destined for higher things under the Arroyo administration. Esperon, for one, is widely expected to be named Armed Forces chief of staff when Gen. Generoso Senga retires later this year.

Disgruntled elements in the military previously called for the investigation of Brig. Gen. Nehemias Pajaro and Brig. Gen. Nelson Allaga, both of whom got their present star rank after the elections. The same elements put forward a list of senior and junior officers, from colonels down to lieutenants, for investigation for violations of the election law.

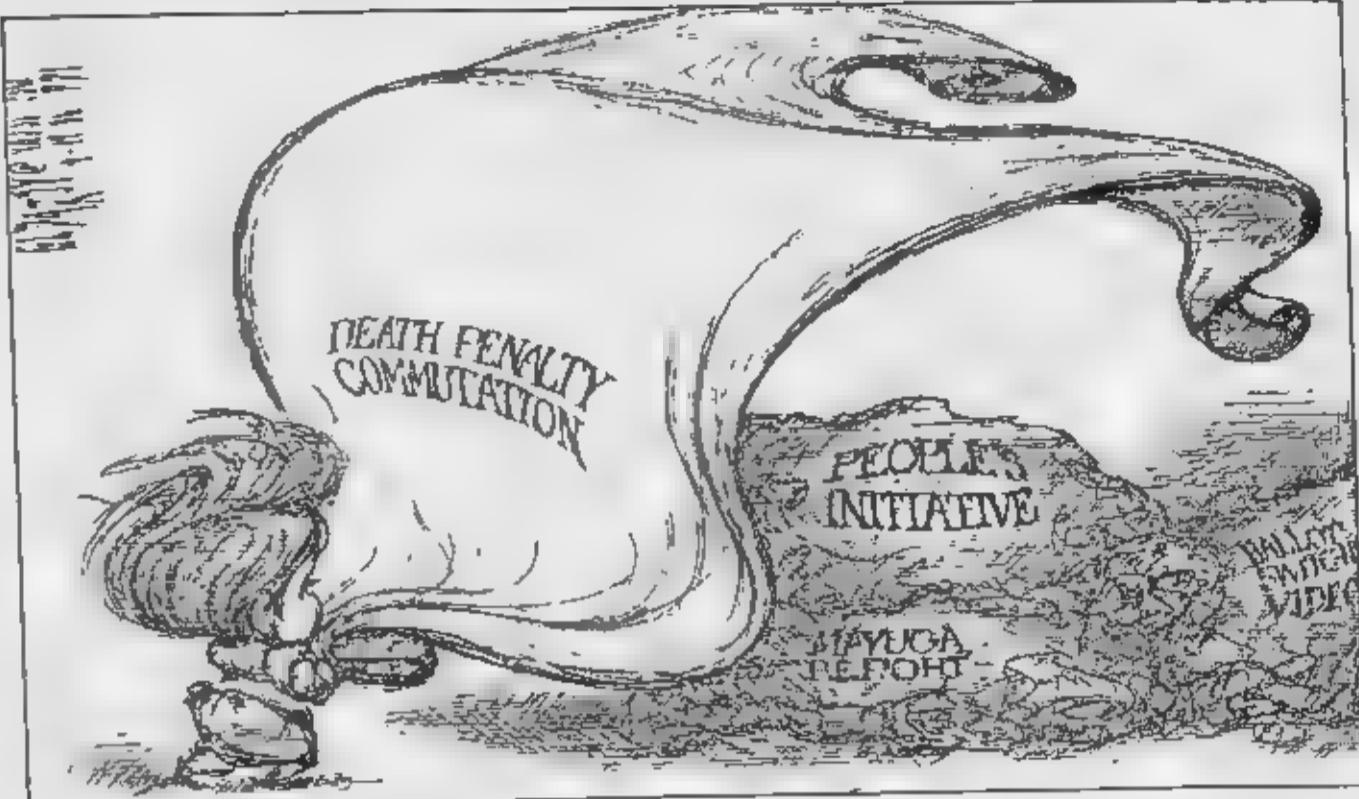
These officers are presumably not out of the woods yet, though the generals obviously are. The Mayuga report says there are some lower-ranking officers who will face further investigation for allegedly unprofessional conduct during the May 2004 elections.

While Mayuga has forcefully defended the integrity of the process over which he presided and appealed for the public to note that he was not interested in making judgments but only in ascertaining "facts," the fact remains that public perception of the purpose of the investigation was to identify and punish officers accused of participating in electoral fraud. Mayuga does not deny the possibility of fraud, but his team has firmly limited it to a lower level and a smaller scale than the original accusations and suspicions.

Just as the fact-finding body was formed in the wake of allegations so scandalous as to cause not just public complaints but disaffection within the ranks of the AFP, its findings come at a time when the only thing that has prevented an escalation of the issue has been the President's executive order forbidding civilians and the military from facing congressional investigations without her permission. The permission has not been forthcoming in instances involving questions over the conduct of elections, and the officers who have disobeyed the President's order have been court-martialed with a speed that should at least have been matched by the undertakings—and release of the findings—of the Mayuga committee.

What has been left unsaid is that the Mayuga report was delayed because it was impolitic to release its findings during the turbulent months leading to February. By all accounts, the administration was taken aback by the scale of opposition to it within the ranks of the military. The Mayuga report, not because of its contents but precisely because of the lack of it, would have been too much at the time.

But times have obviously changed, which is why, though risky, the release of the report was timed to minimize any such political risk. The problem is that it leaves too many questions unanswered.



Dying town and river can still be saved

(Continued from last Monday)

WHAT IS HAPPENING TO MALABON—progress actually killing the charm and personality of old towns—is happening to many other towns in the Philippines, especially those near the urban areas like Metro Manila. Factories, one sign of alleged "progress," have killed the two rivers running through Malabon, as well as many other rivers, including Pasig. Something should be done to save them while there is still time.

With the death of the rivers also died the many fishponds that Malabon used to be famous for and that gave it its own peculiar beauty and charm, space and fresh air. If you are near a fishpond, the air is always cool and fresh, the wind is always blowing, night and day you hear the waves lapping at the banks of the ponds, and you smell the sweet smell of salt water mixed with the smell of the algae that the milkfish feed on.

Now all of that is gone. When the wind blows, all you smell is the stink of the polluted river; you can't swim in it anymore or you'd die of poisoning. And you don't hear the lapping of the waves in the ponds anymore. In fact, you rarely see any pond anymore; they have been filled up (along with parts of the river) and squatters' shanties have been built on them. Shanties and factories have replaced the mangrove stands that used to line both banks of the river, all adding their filth to the already polluted water.

During the town fiesta, there were processions of statues of saints on land and water, with the fluvial parades of the Catholic Church and the Aglipayan Church competing with each other in the beauty and design of their pagodas. On the feast of San Juan, the people took to the rivers again with grand fluvial parades and water games. Now they can't do that anymore. If they went into the river now, it would be like going into an open sewer.

When the rivers overflow their banks during the flood season, the filthy water goes to the

As I See It



Neal H. Cruz

streets, into the yards and even into the homes, and stays on and on for days. In the old days, the rivers also overflowed during spring tides, but those were times for merrymaking instead of revulsion because the water was clean. Children played in the water in the streets and yards, and the water went away when the tide went out. Now the streets are flooded when it rains even if the tide is low.

Why is this happening? Because there is no place for the excess water to go. The fishponds have been filled up and converted into subdivisions. Daga-dagatan, which used to be a big beautiful lake that was a catch basin for excess water, was filled up and converted into a housing project, now a growing sham. The river is now shallow because of silation and can hold less water. Land grabbers are stealing parts of the river, filling them up, building houses on them and having them tided in their names.

The question is, why did the town's leaders allow this to happen? Why did the succession of mayors and other officials not try to stop the degradation of their once-beautiful town? Why did its people allow it? Instead of fighting its slow decay, many of the old families have left and moved to other more livable places. You can hardly find a restaurant selling genuine panat Malabon in Malabon anymore. Patis making, for which Malabon used to be famous, is also dying. Now we import fish sauce from Vietnam and Thailand.

A saving grace is that some of the old rich families have been able to preserve their grand old houses on the main street. But there are many others in the process of decay. The Nation-

al Historical Commission and the national and local governments should help preserve and restore them, as many other countries are doing to their old towns. These restored and preserved towns, especially in the United States and Europe, are now popular tourist spots. (In fact, the government should do more to help preserve the old houses of Vigan and Taal.)

The Tenejero-Tullahan River, in which many boys of my generation (and our horses) used to spend so many happy times, can still be saved. Both ends of the river open up into the sea. The regular high and low tides can wash out the pollution in due time—provided the factories and squatters' homes lining its banks stop throwing their effluents and other waste into it. But they will not do that on their own. The national and local governments, and responsible members of the community, have to make them do it.

There is a plan to build levees on both banks of the river to prevent it from overflowing its banks. They have been talking about it for a long time, but that's about what they have done so far talk. There is no sign that the levees would be built soon, although funding has been assured by the Japanese government. If finally constructed, I think they would be one of the things that can save Malabon.

Even if they are unable to prevent the floods, at least the levees would provide Malabon with two more streets, if they would be built wide enough. That will provide the city with two riverside boulevards running from Manila Bay to Bulacan. Perhaps Malabon and Valenzuela can have Riverwalks similar to Manila's Baywalk.

That would achieve a number of things besides boosting domestic tourism. It would stop land grabbers from encroaching on the river, remove squatters from the riverbanks and stop them and factories from discharging their wastes into the river, raise the value of real estate along the river, and therefore increase the income from real estate tax of the two cities. Then an urban renewal program will make them look like real cities.

Ten things to love about being in the Philippines

(Conclusion)

SDI, DVD AND SOFTWARE. IT USED TO BE you went to the United States to buy DVDs, software and books. Well, today you still go to the United States (and elsewhere) to buy books. I still remember the row upon row of bargain books in The Strand in New York, a cavernous book shop where you need a ladder to get to the tomes on the top shelves. Many of them were still new and hardbound. The DVDs, well, the last time I got them in the United States was in 2001, shortly before 9/11, and I counted myself lucky to have bought them on sale.

Today, you do not go to the United States to buy DVDs; your foils in the United States come here to buy DVDs. Or implore you to send them some, such as your messenger is intrepid enough to risk problems at immigration. Indeed, today your problem is not how to lay your hands on DVDs, or on good titles, your problem is how to organize the tomes of them, including absolute classics, that are piling up in your not very big house. I have solved that problem by buying them without the case and storing them in canisters. I still have to solve the problem of how to find the time to watch them.

Those who feel like berating me for listing the DVDs from Quiapo among the things that make this country livable might first wish to examine whether the Windows they're using to boot their PCs and the software they're using to write their furious letters with are original or licensed.

Seven, Quiapo. Before my mother suffered a stroke some years ago, which much debilitated her mind if not her body, she used to go to Quiapo to do her marketing. She was born and raised in Manila. The fact that many markets, wet or super, were near did little to dissuade her from making the long trip by jeepney. She was already past her 80s then, but she was strong and strong-willed. Nothing beats Quiapo for the real deal, she said.

She was right. It was so then, it is so now. It's the one place where you get the best bargains for

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

the buck, in more ways than one.

It's a place, too, where you find tolerance and difference, pattern amid incongruity, order amid chaos. It's the place where the Quiapo church stands just across the street from the mosque. It's the place where the sounds of prayer mingle with the cries of barker, where hawkers thrive with sellers of snake oil, where the benefits promised by public officials vie with the efficacious results promised by the peddlers of pamploring. It's grimy, noisy and pushy. It's honest, colorful and sublime.

Eight, the countryside. That is to say, any place outside Metro Manila, not necessarily your hometown. The food is cheaper and the smiles are broader. In past years, I used to travel a lot across the country to talk in graduations and forums but I have kept to Manila of late because of pressing concerns. I like visiting the Visayas for many reasons, not the least of which is that it is accessible by air and sea. But more than that, the Spaniards were right: it's the land of the puroys, of a people given to wine and song. I won't mention what goes along with wine and song lest I get into trouble as well.

Of course, it's not always easy to keep an Amorsolo image of the countryside amid the want and strife to be found there. But you'd be a fool to imagine that's all you'll find to the countryside. Especially in summer, when the sun dangles from a cloudless sky and shimmers across undulating field and hewing sea. It's always a little brighter in the countryside in summer, which puts you to it like, well, an Amorsolo painting.

Nine, kakanin, halo-halo. When I was a kid, you found the kakanin (pudding, rice cakes, etc.) plentifully in the market. But if you

were too lazy to take the short walk there, there were the itinerant vendors who hawked the stuff in the streets. I recall that at one point one of our teachers in high school, an American Jesuit, who had been insisting that we speak slowly, audibly and clearly in class, pointed triumphantly to one of those itinerant vendors and cried, "That is how you should speak!" You could hear the voice of the kid from a distance shouting "Boduya" (banana drenched in batter) in the tones of an angel. Kakanin's gain, amateur hour's loss.

Two things I've always associated with summer: tuft (circumcision) and halo-halo. The first came from announcements in newspapers and signs in streets that said almost cryptically, "Summertime! Tuft!" To this day, I find myself saying that phrase every time Gershwin's famous ode to summertime is sung. The second is halo-halo, a concoction that makes you see and feel the haze of summer. Not least because it truly makes you full and sleepy. I know most of the ingredients there—beans of all shapes and sizes—are gutt-inducing, but I figure that these days in particular there are more things to give you pain in this country than gutt.

Ten, the people. I still recall something a friend of mine, an American banker, told me before he left for another post. He had pretty much gone around the world, he said, but he found few people as genuinely warm and solicitous as Filipinos. Of course, in excessive form, he said, Filipinos also tended to be familiar and intrusive, as when new acquaintances went on to pry into his personal life. But even that he found to be largely harmless, if not well-meaning. In the United States, he said, waiters and sales clerks greeted you, "Have a good day," but there was little joy or conviction in their eyes. Here, people said "ingat," and meant it.

I did think of writing as well "10 things to hate about being in the Philippines." But either that goes well past 10 or it can be reduced to just one, take your pick.

But that's quite another story. It's Easter, I'll leave the trapezoids for tomorrow.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

Old debate reopened

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



THE COMMUTATION LAST WEEK OF THE death sentences on 1,205 convicts awaiting execution has reopened a politically contentious debate over capital punishment in the Philippines, one of the 74 countries in the world that have retained the death penalty. At the end of 2005, 123 countries had abolished capital punishment, following a global trend since 1977, when the number of abolitionist countries stood at 16.

When President Macapagal-Arroyo in her Easter message announced the commutation of the death sentences to life imprisonment, it carried both religious symbolism and an implicit message of a possible policy shift toward the abolition of capital punishment. The announcement provoked mixed reactions from various sectors, including the Catholic Church, human rights lobby groups, anti-crime organizations, victims of heinous crimes (offenses covered by the Death Penalty Law), lawyers and political groups, notably opposition leaders who read in it a shrewd political move to deflect the issue of the people's initiative to revise the Constitution.

In fact, the Filipino people, during the Holy Week, had a respite from the already sterile Chachu debate. They had switched their attention to the sensational debate that rocked Christendom as it commemorated the Crucifixion of Christ over the recently discovered "Gospel of Judas," casting the most reviled traitor in history in less villainous light.

The wide reaction to the presidential announcement revealed not so much how controversial the President has become as how contentious is the issue of capital punishment. What provoked the new debate was the fact that since Ms Arroyo imposed a moratorium on the execution of convicts in 2001, the Easter announcement marked the biggest batch of commutations she had ever made. Traditionally, Easter and Christmas are the two seasons of the year when the President exercises executive clemency.

In her Easter message, the President said, "As we celebrate Jesus' Resurrection, I wish to announce that we are changing our policy on those who have been imposed the death penalty to life imprisonment. We are reducing their penalty to life imprisonment."

The phrase "we are changing our policy" suggested that the President was using the commutation of sentences as a springboard for initiating legislation that would abolish capital punishment. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye gave the Easter message a stronger meaning when he said that the President would push for the repeal of Republic Act No. 7659 (the Death Penalty Law), which has been in place since 1994, "if necessary," to give substance to "the forgiveness and compassion" that she extended in her message.

These statements immediately alarmed pro-death penalty groups, among them the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption whose members include survivors of heinous crimes and the Movement for the Restoration of Peace and Order. The MRPO has campaigned actively against the repeal of the Death Penalty Law on behalf of members of the Chinese community who were victims of kidnapping for ransom, classified as a heinous crime under RA 7659. These two groups did not offer new arguments and evidence to support their old line that capital punishment is a deterrent to heinous crimes. The VACC offered an irrelevant argument that the President acted as if she were "the judiciary and the legislature" and that the commutation was motivated by a desire

to please the Catholic Church and the European Union, while the MRPO went off tangent by accusing her of "wholesale disregard of the law."

Some lawyers have attacked the President for "complete disregard of the Supreme Court in her decision to summarily move to commute all death penalties to life imprisonment." They said the commutation was an affront to the Constitution and Congress because it ran roughshod over the principle of separation of powers among the three branches.

The commutation of the death sentences reopened old divisions over the death penalty issue. Human rights groups applauded it while Catholic bishops did not enthusiastically respond to it as a collegial body, with only some bishops lauding it. If the commutation was intended to win the political support of the Catholic hierarchy, which has been campaigning vigorously for the repeal of the Death Penalty Law, there was no sign it had mellowed the position of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines which, days before the President's announcement, had issued a pastoral letter criticizing the administration-sponsored campaign to collect signatures to back a petition to revise the Constitution through a people's initiative.

What seems certain is that the commutation has rekindled the move to repeal the Death Penalty Law. It increased the clamor of human rights groups for the President to exert more effort to abolish the death penalty by pressing Congress to pass a new law. That such legislation has languished in the legislature is proof of its being too contentious even for members of Congress. The fact that the President has not certified the draft legislation as urgent indicates that she is hesitant to make it a defining issue for her administration, which is battling for its life over the issues of legitimacy and constitutional change. Unless she presses Congress to pass the repeal legislation, the Easter message will remain a pious gesture. But the repeal of the law carries political costs.

Who we are

IT ISN'T JUST IN THE PHILIPPINES WHERE THE DEBATE over the death penalty has been revived. Last week, for instance, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops issued an Easter pastoral letter calling for the abolition of the death penalty.

The United States and Japan are, currently the only developed countries where capital punishment is still used. The United States is often singled out for studies because, like the Philippines, it abolished the death penalty in 1972, only to bring it back in 1976.

Not all the American states have brought back capital punishment, and debates continue with many issues. I'm summarizing some of the issues here.

The first is that of fairness. Opponents of the death penalty have pointed out that there is a certain arbitrariness to the use of capital punishment. In the United States, about 2 percent of convicted murderers are sentenced to death. Turning the tables around, one could argue that if the death penalty were truly a form of just punishment, then all convicted murderers should be executed.

That will never happen of course, and, worse, the chances of being meted out the death penalty, and of the sentence being carried out, increase if one is poor, and an African-American or Hispanic-American.

I am certain that if we looked at our own Death Row, we would find that most of the convicts are from the lower socio-economic strata, and if we look at the ones who have been executed, the percentage of the poor would rise even higher.

Another way of discussing this fairness issue is to look at how we protest whenever a Filipino is sentenced to death abroad. Yet, using the argument of fairness, we really cannot argue against the execution of Filipinos overseas if we continue to impose the death penalty here at home.

A second issue is that of justice, which is different from fairness. Here, the issue is whether capital punishment sometimes results in the execution of the innocent. With advances in forensics and DNA analysis, more and more cases of wrongful conviction have been uncovered in the United States.

This issue often overlaps with that of fairness in the sense that wrongful convictions are more likely to involve the poor and non-white.

The possibility of wrongful convictions is high in the Philippines. Between 1997 and 2003, the Supreme Court reviewed about 730 death sentences, and in almost 500 cases, the sentences were reduced or remanded. Sixty of those who had been sentenced to death were actually acquitted. If DNA tests were made available, I suspect many more cases would have been overturned.

A third issue is that of deterrence. Death penalty advocates say that executions bring down the crime rate. The US data show otherwise. In the northeastern states, where the death penalty is almost never used, murder rates are about 4.2 per 100,000 population. In the south, which accounts for 80 percent of executions, the murder rate is 6.6 per 100,000, the highest in the country.

In the Philippines, the role of the death penalty in deterring crime is probably even more insignificant, mainly because the biggest criminals know they are untouchable. As small-time drug pushers and kidnapping hirelings languish in prison, waiting for the lethal injection, the syndicate heads, the politicians who plunder the economy, go scot-free. Criminals know that crime pays in the Philippines, with or without the death penalty.

Terrorism

The American debate over the death penalty found new focus recently with the case of Zacarias Moussaoui, a French national of Moroccan descent who was convicted for terror, in connection with the terrorist attacks in Washington, D.C. and New York City on Sept. 11, 2001. The jury is still undecided whether to recommend the death penalty or life imprisonment.

Moussaoui was actually arrested in August 2001, a month before the terrorist attacks. Immigration agents apprehended him after he tried to get a flight school to teach him how to fly a commercial airliner. He was convicted on the argument that he had refused, after his arrest, to divulge information about his terrorist connections. If he had done so, the prosecution argued, maybe the twin towers bombing could have been prevented.

Public opinion seems to favor the conviction, and probably even a death sentence, because the 9/11 attacks were so heinous. It didn't help that Moussaoui showed no remorse during the trial. He described as "gorgeous" the smoking ruins of the Trade Center, and said the attackers were now probably "in the highest level of paradise."

The defense has argued that Moussaoui is mentally unstable, probably a schizophrenic. He is the son of a violent alcoholic father and a mother who left him and his siblings with others for child care. Al-Qaeda members themselves said Moussaoui was considered too unreliable and was being re-served for a second wave of attacks.

John Farmer, senior counsel to a special commission created to investigate the 9/11 attacks, has argued that Moussaoui should not be executed since he was not a leader of al-Qaeda, and did not actually participate in the terrorist attacks. Another angle he uses is that executing Moussaoui would be a form of assisted suicide, one which would allow him to claim martyrdom.

Evil

The Moussaoui case should make us think hard about the death penalty in the Philippines. A death sentence, an execution, could bring some sense of justice to several thousand in the Moussaoui case. For society, the execution becomes part of a morality play, where the state can claim that it is meeting out justice—with hopes that this will deter crime.

Death-penalty advocates refer to the need to deal with evil, but John Farmer offers another perspective when he writes: "Zacarias Moussaoui is evil, and there is no doubt, that he arrived here determined to kill Americans, but he was not a leader of al-Qaeda." Moreover, Farmer argues for life imprisonment so that Moussaoui can die in prison "frustrated and forgotten, embittered and anonymous."

Farmer makes a good point about the kind of justice Moussaoui deserves. When we lash out at those who have wronged us, we justify our actions by saying we are dealing with evil. That argument is being used by the US government itself, when American soldiers torture and degrade suspected Islamist militants. But an American legislator looking into alleged brutality against the suspected Islamists summarized the issues well when he said that human rights, even for those we perceive to be evil, have to be respected. "It's not about who they are, but about who we are."

US Catholic bishops put it another way: "The use of state-authorized killing in our names diminishes us all." In the name of restoring justice, we all lose part of our humanity, whenever we condone an execution, whether in the lethal injection chamber or through salvaging or extra-legal means.

Talking about the 'Code'

AT LARGE



Rina Jimenez-David

and manipulating your emotions.

LEONARDO: It's called suspension of disbelief, dummy! And we learned it in high school. How can one read—and enjoy—a work of fiction and not fall willingly into the writer's imagined world? However offensive, it's a world that was created by the writer for the reader, and we play along, at least while we're reading him, or her. Playing with our minds and manipulating our emotions are what artists do all the time, and we let them, because most of us just don't have the resources of imagination or creativity to create worlds of our own.

LEONARDO: That's all very well for you like me.

LEONARDO: I'm not, you know ... in fact, I majored in economics!

LEONARDO: Well, at least you have a college degree. You can think for yourself, you're part of the educated class! But what about those who're too ignorant or innocent to read "The Da Vinci Code" and regard its claims with a grain of salt? How about them?

LEONARDO: Well, first of all, "The Da Vinci Code" is not exactly *romance*, or *pong-pong* reading. And aren't you a bit insulting the more than 40 million folks who've read the book so far? If every one of them took Brown's claims seriously, don't you think we'd be seeing at least a few million of them walking out of the Church and renouncing their Christianity?

LEONARDO: Maybe not with the book, but what about the movie? I really hope the MTRCB listens to the anti-pornography group's petition to ban the movie. If the book was offensive and dangerous, what more the movie, which would be seen by even more people, people who don't read?

LEONARDO: Yeah, I heard about that petition

They said that showing the movie was unconstitutional, of all things!

LEONARDO: Akala ko ba matatalin ka? Of course, it's unconstitutional. It violates the freedom of religion!

LEONARDO: Well, if the MTRCB bans "The Da Vinci Code," it would be violating my freedom of choice, of information and the moviemakers' freedom of expression. What are they so afraid of?

LEONARDO: I told you—the book and the movie undermines Christianity and threatens the faith of the average Christian.

LEONARDO: I have a news flash for you. I think you have far less faith in other people's faith or in your own!

LEONARDO: And you have an unfounded confidence in other people's intelligence!

LEONARDO: I think I know what really gets your goat about "The Da Vinci Code." It's not that it questions Christ's divinity, but because it promotes worship of the "divine feminine." I also hate the thought that a woman was actually chosen by Christ as head of his Church—until her leadership was undermined by the male apostles.

LEONARDO: That's what I mean by readers going off on ridiculous tangents just from reading the book! But just to humor you... Do you really think Christ would have chosen a woman, even if she were his wife, as his successor?

LEONARDO: Why not? One of his central messages, wasn't it, was that all of us, men and women, are all children of God, equal inheritors of the Kingdom?

LEONARDO: If so, why did he choose 12 men for his apostles? Men were meant to take on positions of leadership, while women are good only for serving meals and waiting on the men!

LEONARDO: Hmmpf! Just as your favorite school thinks physical activity is unsightly for girls, and that's why it banned girls' soccer! Or why another of your favorite schools banned mothers, yaya and aunts from the school grounds because they might get scandalized by the sight of boys changing clothes!

LEONARDO: Women are so illogical! I thought we were talking about "The Da Vinci Code"? Aaargh!

Imported goods

LOOKING BACK

Amelia R. Ocampo



ECONOMICS WAS NOT ONE OF MY FAVORITE subjects, maybe because numbers, equations and any form of computation make my knees tremble. My relatives are all business-minded, which makes me the mutant in the family. Everyone knows I became a historian because I couldn't cope with math. But going through the two-volume work of Jean Mallat on the Philippines published in 1846, I was perversely attracted to the last section that had several pages filled with stale economic data: tax and tariff tables, trade figures, etc. I realized that focusing on the articles being exchanged between the Philippines and other countries, while ignoring the numbers, still told me a lot about people and trade in those times and, by comparison, ours.

In 1841, for example, France bought from the Philippines coffee, sugar, indigo, hides, cigars, turtle shell, sapan wood (whatever that is) in return. France exported cloth, wines and various merchandise, including paper and clothes. The United Kingdom, from 1831-1840, imported from the Philippines non-refined sugar, raw hemp and Cassia lignea (described as "Imitation cinnamon"). The United Kingdom also got indigo, wool, manufactured tobacco and straw hats (I wonder which part of the Philippines exported wool). In return, the United Kingdom sent to the Philippines wool, cotton, linen and hemp.

The commerce with China seemed to have been quite lively. This was a long trading relationship that went back to pre-colonial times to at least the 9th century. In 1841, Chinese traders brought to Manila linen and silk cloth, raw silk, tea, stationery, umbrellas, hardware, stoneware and porcelain, edibles and other articles not described in the trading table provided by Mallat. Manila exported to China gold dust, swallow's nests, indigo, sea cucumber, cotton, rice, edibles, silk cloth, currency and "other articles." (One wonders why pearls are not included or even hemp, as if the Chinese didn't need rope.)

The Philippines also traded with Portugal, Macao and sent 25 ships annually and not just from the main trading ports of Manila and Zamboanga. Macao had a concession and could conduct trade from Pasacao, Sorsogon, Capiz and Currino. Manila sent to Macao batane, sepias nests, sibi (dried shrimp), buffalo hide, log wood, cotton, deer sinews called *nervio de venado*, shark's fin, ebony wood, molave, nacra, liquid indigo or turon and gold dust.

There must be some pattern in all these lists, some sense in seemingly useless information. My interest in underwater archeology now being undertaken by the National Museum made me take a second look at the Chinese exports to the Philippines. I'm sure this didn't vary very much from the 9th to the 19th centuries. When the National Museum or some unawary fishermen come across a sunken vessel, the items that survived time and salt water are usually porcelain (often encrusted with coral) and, of course, metal and wood. It's unfortunate that due to the demand of the antiquities market, poachers take all the commercially viable items like porcelain and leave out the other things that will make us understand trade between China and the Philippines a thousand years ago.

Promiscuously, the obsessive-compulsive Mallat took the trouble to list down the cargo of a Chinese sampan that entered the port of Manila during his stay. The list is quite long and can be boring if read straight through, so I took out the items that appear interesting to give you an idea

what the Chinese knew or thought the Filipinos wanted to buy.

Food is on the top of my list and here we see 261 covered jugs of garlic and salted radish, 8 piculs of agua mala (this translates as "bad water" and I wonder what this is), 204 gantas of Chinese oil, 1,140 gantas of red rice, 2 piculs of Chinese anise, 20 piculs dried fish, 50 baskets of chest nuts, 15 katis of liquorice juice, 3 piculs of banana flowers, 568 hams, 1 cabon (sack) of dried apples, 490 katis of different kinds of tea, 2 piculs of rum, 1,990 katis of small sweet oranges, 3 cabanas of nuts, 200 piculs of sutanju (obviously, vermicelli or sotanghon), and 12,000 peans.

Naturally, other goods related to food were not far behind. The sampan also carried 11,000 bamboo sticks (obviously chopsticks), 330 dishes of blue porcelain, 250 kinds of varnished pottery, 250 small wooden spoons, 56 iron spoons, 20 small bamboo baskets, 44 small boxes made of Chinese crockery, 57 stone (granite?) mills for grinding, 1,500 sharpening stones (pong heo we call them, but strangely no knives and cleavers are mentioned in the inventory), 600 small green earthenware plates (cladon?), 12,832 large white porcelain plates (bandejador we call them), 81 different shapes of white porcelain plates, 715 small green jars, 3,420 small black jars of different kinds, 51,661 blue crockery plates, 11,500 tinderbox complete with fire, 220 small soap plates of bluish porcelain, 57 jars of blue crockery, 60,000 cups of different kinds, 80 copper pots, 137 species of bowls with handles, 189 earthenware jars, and finally 3 jugs of the best quality.

All of the above explain the Chinese influence in our food but they don't explain why only 100 toothbrushes were exported to Manila compared to 820 ear picks and 108 spiroons of green pottery. Now that's a puzzle.

Comments are welcome at www.ameliaocampo.com

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Mobile Internet café roams Batanes

By Grace Sarmiento-Clavecilla
Contributor

IN THE COUNTRY'S NORTH-
ernmost province of Batanes,
weaving buntal hats is a source
of livelihood for the Ivatan people,
who sell the products as souvenir
items to tourists for P150 apiece.

In the Internet age, however, buntal makers
need not be confined to a small local market.

"The design and craftsmanship of your buntal
is very impressive. In fact, it is at par with the
signature golf hats being sold by Australian profes-
sional golfer Greg Norman," said Information
Technology Commissioner Virgilio Peña at a cer-
emony in the capital town of Basco last week.

"Through the worldwide web, your hat
weavers can now exhibit your products to a
bigger market. All you need is a website
where you can display your products, and an
e-mail address through which you can com-
municate with potential buyers and business
partners," Peña said.

In the international market, he said, this same
hat could be sold for \$25 (P1,283) to \$30
(P1,540), up to 10 times the local retail price.

Peña graced the launch of the new mobile Internet
café service of Smart Communications. Called the Smart Click, the new facility is a 40-
foot container van that has been converted into
an airconditioned Internet café. It is equipped
with 15 workstations connected to the Internet
via high-speed wireless broadband service.

Peña said Internet facilities could be used by
residents to link up with global markets.

Attraction of remoteness

It seems the very remoteness of Batanes
(190 km from Apayao, Cagayan, the northern-
most tip of mainland Luzon, or an 18-hour
boat ride) has attracted the interest of
telecommunications companies.

Smart, in particular, has repeatedly made Bas-
co the site for launching or testing new services.
Over the past four years, it has introduced to the
province its satellite phone service, its GSM
(global system for mobile communication) cellular
phone service, and, recently, its wireless
broadband Internet service and Internet edu-
cation program for public schools.

Batanes first landed on the broadband map
when public school teacher Florence Cielo of the
Batanes National High School (BNHS) received a
call on her cell phone from a Smart official in
Metro Manila. Cielo is the school's computer lab-
oratory manager and head of the technology and
livelihood economics department.

"I was told that our school had been chosen to
receive equipment, technical assistance, and one-
year free broadband Internet connection, courtesy
of the Smart schools program," Cielo said.

The program is a community service initiative
designed to help public high school teachers and
students learn how to tap the web as a learning
resource. It provides broadband Internet connectivity,
teacher training programs, and online content
development programs.

The BNHS, which has more than 400 stu-
dents, topped the province's National Achieve-
ment Tests (NAT) in 2004 and outscored its
counterparts in the regional examinations.

It started accessing the Internet using satellite
in 2003 as part of Microsoft Philippines' "Part-
ners in Learning Program."

At that time, the school received 10 personal
computers courtesy of the "PCs for Public High
Schools Program" of the Department of Trade
and Industry. The problem? The satellite Internet
connection cost P19,500 a month.

"Could you just imagine the relief I felt when I
got that call from Smart in June 2005? Not only
are we getting some new desktop [computers],
we're also getting free teacher training and Inter-
net connectivity for a full year," Cielo said.

After the one-year grace period, the BNHS will
start paying less than P2,000 a month for broad-
band Internet access. This is still a small amount
compared to what they used to pay, Cielo said.

'Broadbanding' education

"Of course, there are cost savings. But more
importantly, we can now accommodate more
students in the computer laboratory because we
have more desktops and all 20 of them are con-
nected to high-speed Internet," she said.

The teachers are also benefiting from the
wealth of information provided by the Internet.

"We have subjects for which we don't have
readily available materials in the library. As
you know, our resources in the library are
very limited," Cielo said.

This is crucial when it comes to science lessons.
With access to the worldwide web now made
readily available, teachers no longer have to de-
pend on outdated textbooks to come up with
teaching aids. With a few clicks, they can present
multimedia illustrations and lesson simulations.

Exposing the students to the benefits and
use of information and communications tech-
nology has started to increase the demand for
net access services, Cielo said.

To meet the growing demand for broadband
Internet access in remote towns like Basco, Smart
is now deploying mobile Internet cafés.

"We are convinced that there is a significant
demand for Internet access and other commun-
ications services in remote municipalities. Smart
Click is a very cost-effective solution," said Tim
Mariano, head of Smart's Public Access Group.

Connected by wireless broadband links pro-
viding speeds of up to 1 mbps (megabits per
sec), Smart Click will serve as a neighbor-

one-stop digital shop.

Aside from renting out the 15 PCs in the
shop, the mobile Internet cafés offer desktop
publishing services, including printing and
scanning of documents and photos.

Children and adults can also play online
games and other entertainment features.

The café is also a communications center
where people can connect with friends and
relatives abroad via e-mail, fax, chat, or web
cam (web camera).

"Smart Click can also serve as a commu-
nity training facility where people can learn
how to use computers and the Internet. We
hope to help boost computer literacy in the

countryside with the roll out of this project,"
Mariano said.

As of 2004, about 8 million people use the
Internet in the Philippines, roughly equiva-
lent to a 5.3-percent penetration rate. This is
far below most Asian countries—lower than
China (7.2 percent), Vietnam (7.1 percent)
and Indonesia (6.5 percent).

The high cost or nonavailability of Internet
access used to be a major constraint to the
growth of Internet usage in the country. But
that is now being addressed as telephone com-
panies bring down Internet access prices and
introduce more Internet network facilities in
many parts of the country.

Grace Sarmiento-Clavecilla, a former reporter of
Computerworld Philippines, now works as public
affairs officer of Smart Communications.

NEXOR
HDPE Solid Pipes
PRICELIST AVAILABLE ONLINE
For inquiries Call: Tel. : 712-9410
JUNNI Website: www.nexorpipes.com

SA APRIL 25

LOLIKAS
TAYONG
LAHAT!

Find the life that takes, do you know what I mean?
The life that takes you for the worse, like
the life that takes you could mean life or death.

B.E.E.P.

BUILDING EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN

DRILL

11 AM APRIL 25, 2006

In Compliance With The
"SAFE KA BA?"
NATIONAL DISASTER PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM



Asthma cases traced to port quarry project

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Citing rising cases of children suffering from asthma, Zambales Vice Gov. Ramon Lachain II has asked the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority to order a stop to quarrying in a coastal village off Subic town by a firm supplying soil and stones to the agency's Japanese-funded port project.

Armand Arreza, SBMA administrator, said the permit of Rising Sun to quarry at Sitio Nagyantok in Barangay Cawag had been cancelled two weeks ago.

"It committed lots of violations. For one, it did not have blasting permits," Arreza said when reached through his mobile phone.

Responding to Lachain's request filed on Monday and his report that the company continued operations, SBMA ecology center manager Ameth de la Llana said she and her team were scheduled to start on Tuesday an investigation of the health and environmental concerns in Nagyantok. The area is within the territorial jurisdiction of the SBMA.

If reports proved true, she said Rising Sun was bound by its environmental clearance certificate to answer for adverse social and environmental impacts.

ROUNDUP

Physical therapy training

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—Barangay health workers in Tampakan, South Cotabato recently underwent training on basic physical therapy (PT) procedures during an orientation and treatment mission conducted by the Dr. Liborio Gomez Foundation of Davao City. The training was held at the Competence Center of Sagittarius Mines, Inc. The BHWs were taught basic knowledge on treating musculoskeletal, neurologic and other physical injuries and ailments through physical therapy, proper management of patients suffering from stroke, fractures, scoliosis, burns and osteoporosis. Tampakan health chief Dr. Washington Corono said the training was important to residents who have no access to medical treatment.

Aquiles Zain, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Subdivision exec slain

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—Two men shot and killed the president of a neighborhood association of a subdivision located a few meters from this camp on Sunday dawn. Police said Lolita Ariola, 52, president of the Sta. Cecilia Neighborhood Association in Ceres 1-A, Barangay Canibang, Calamba City was walking toward the gate of the subdivision at around 5 a.m. when the assailants approached and shot her at least twice on her body. The killers fled on board a still unknown vehicle. Noble said the motive in the killing had yet to be ascertained.

Marlo Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Luggage X-ray machine



LEGAZPI CITY—With the resumption of Air Philippines' operation, in addition to the Manila-Legazpi daily flights of Philippine Airlines, Bicol officials echoed the need to either repair or replace the luggage X-ray machine at the city airport. Gov. Fernando Gonzalez, who was alarmed by complaints of departing passengers about delay in the physical inspection of their baggage, has reiterated a request to the Department of Budget and Management for P1.2 million to solve the problem.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Computer fee questioned

LEGAZPI CITY—Some 100 students of the Banquerohan National High School (BNHS) Oro Site Extension campus here were surprised by the P500 being collected by the school as computer fee when they sought officials to sign their clearances. The students claimed they were allowed to use the computers only once or twice during the school year. This was confirmed by the school's finance officer, Jeff Buza, who claimed that he had remitted to the principal, Norma Oroso, whatever amount he collected. Higher school authorities could not explain the collection and where the money went.

Edgar Alejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Another NPA camp falls

JUCENA CITY—Army soldiers discovered another New People's Army (NPA) camp in the Sierra Madre mountain ranges on April 7. Southern Luzon Command chief Lt. Gen. Pedro Cabuyao Jr. said two squads from the Army's 16th Infantry Battalion raided the rebel camp on the mountain slope in Sitio Anibongan, Barangay Magsikap in General Nakar town. The soldiers recovered an M-16 rifle with a full magazine, one 38 cal. revolver, one rifle grenade, two GP 2000 Motorola radios with two headsets, two extra chargers and a battery pack, one sack of anti-government documents, med cal kit and assorted documents, 50 computer CDs, and an NPA flag.

Delin Malibay Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Head of mine spill probe team comes out in open against mining

By Bobby Labalan
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

SORSOGON CITY—THE COMMISSION created by Malacañang to conduct an independent investigation of the operation of Australian firm Lafayette Philippines Inc. (LPI) voiced strong opposition to allowing the company to resume operations.

Bishop Arturo Bastes, chair of the nine-man commission, said the probe body would raise a howl if LPI was al-

lowed to resume operations while the investigation was still ongoing.

Bastes, a staunch mining critic, said the commission had asked Malacañang to extend for another month a one-month timetable it gave the commission to finish the job.

Lawyer Julito Sarmiento, LPI director and corporate secretary, said he respected the bishop's stand but he explained that what the mining firm was asking was to be allowed to conduct a test run of

its operations to see whether the safeguards it put in place to prevent future spills were still ongoing.

"These test runs should be a welcome move for the commission since the body is supposed to be for fact-finding. Like a car being tested for emissions, you won't know if it's compliant unless you test-drive it," the official added.

Bastes said the commission had found "so many irregularities from the very beginning and so much irresponsibility from gov-

ernment regulators from the very start."

The bishop, however, refused to elaborate on the commission's findings.

Gov. Raul Lee has expressed doubts about the commission's impartiality as Bastes and some of his members are known to be mining critics.

Bastes challenged the commission to also conduct its own water, fish and sediment analysis, similar to what the provincial and city governments of Sorsogon

had done.

Lee said the investigation must be based on scientific facts and not on mere speculations for results to be credible.

An independent study by the University of the Philippines' Natural Sciences Research Institute has confirmed previous findings made by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources that the mercury level in the coastal areas of Sorsogon was within tolerable level.

A fish scare that gripped the fishing towns of Sorsogon and deprived its communities of livelihood is turning out to be based on a false report that mercury was contaminating fish and other marine creatures.

The National Bureau of Investigation has already started looking into the source of the report as several officials and groups of fishermen demanded that those who started it be brought to justice and punished.



TEST OF STRENGTH

Members of the Igurot tribe take part in a contest that is based on a ritual. The game is known as Alin Si Koew, a Kankany word that means rolling logs when men of the Igurot tribe find firewood in the mountains to be used in cooking sacrificial animals.

₱8M in cars stolen in Korea seized in Cebu

By Jolene R. Bulambot
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—THE BUREAU OF Customs has impounded P8 million worth of used and stolen luxury cars that were smuggled into Cebu from South Korea on April 13.

The 10 luxury cars, with an estimated value of P800,000 each, were loaded in five container vans.

Maria Lourdes Mangaoang, customs district collector, said the nine Sorento Limited vehicles and a Starex Hyundai van would be immediately returned to Korea upon the arrival of Korean customs representatives in Cebu anytime this week.

Mangaoang said a big-time syndicate operating in Cebu had been busted with the seizure of the smuggled vehicles.

cles.

She said Cebu-based businessmen, who wanted her out of the port, could be involved in the shipment.

She said the customs bureau was prompted to open the container vans after receiving a letter from Roh Suk-Hwan, director of the International Cooperation Division of the Intel, Science and International Affairs Bureau

of the Korea Customs Service.

The letter alerted the BOC on the vehicle smuggling.

It was addressed to John Simon, chief of the international affairs of the BOC, requesting the bureau for assistance in its ongoing investigation of a smuggling case in Korea.

The letter said the luxury cars, on board the MV Pearl Island, were stolen in Korea.

Ilonggo stunt man sweeps streets for 16 hours

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ALMODOAN, ILOILO—Stunt man Jess Caigoy finally decided to quit mid-night yesterday but not after setting what he hoped would be a world record for continuous street sweeping.

Sunburn, severely exhausted and dehydrated, Caigoy decided to park his improvised broomstick at 12:32 a.m., exactly 16 hours and 37 minutes after he started his feat and after covering 22 km.

"I had difficulty hearing and my steps were getting smaller and smaller," Caigoy yesterday told the Inquirer at his air-conditioned room at the Aleosan District Hospital where he rested.

Short of his target of sweeping nonstop for 24 hours, Caigoy said he at first felt frustrated at being forced to quit at Barangay Igatambo in San Miguel town, a kilometer from the poblacion.

"I cried but I later realized I was not breaking a record but setting one," he said.

He said the scorching heat that raised the temperature to 42.7 degrees Celsius past noon on Monday wore him down.

With his latest feat, the 45-year-old Caigoy, who has been dubbed the "Master of Pain" for

performing extreme stunts, hopes to earn a spot in the Guinness Book of World Records.

He said they would send video documentation and other pieces of proof to the world record body to back up his claim.

Caigoy also performed the feat to help raise funds for the government-run Aleosan District Hospital.

Dr. Ernesto Gavilles, hospital chief, said the money raised from donations during Caigoy's stunt would help the 50-bed hospital acquire equipment, such as operating room tables and machines.

"It would be a big help to us because more than half of our annual P21 million budget goes to salaries..." Gavilles told the

Inquirer.

The hospital can only allot P10 per meal for every patient because its budget has not changed since 2003, said Gavilles.

Caigoy began sweeping the streets at 7:25 a.m. Monday at his native Leon town, 28 km southwest of Iloilo City. He only took two 15-minute breaks during the more than 16 hours he swept the streets using broomsticks made of buri palm and a PVC pipe handle.

From Leon, he continued sweeping to the neighboring Almodian town and was on his third and last eight-hour leg in San Miguel when exhaustion set in.

Although short of his target, Caigoy won the hearts of residents who lined up the streets until the evening.

The residents who were curious and eager to see him clean the streets shook his hand and gave donations.

"It was overwhelming," said Caigoy.

Leon Councilor Roberto Calar III, the event organizer, said the total amount of donations and pledges was still being determined.

Organizers are hoping to net P100,000 from sponsorship and donations. Under an agreement, 70 percent of the proceeds, or P70,000, will be donated to the

hospital.

The rest of the amount will go to Caigoy to defray training expenses and organizing costs.

Caigoy, who spent 27 years in Manila as an office clerk and later as a stunt man, returned to his hometown with his family because he said "life was getting difficult" in the capital.

He became fascinated with extreme stunts in 1994 and eventually became hooked to performing incredible feats of physical endurance like breaking wine bottles in his head, cracking electric fan blades while they rotated at full speed, and pulling a car with a rope attached to knives embedded in his stomach.

His long list of stunts have landed him in "Ripley's Believe It or Not," Incredible Features, AXN Action channel and in local variety shows.

In 2003, he tried to set a Guinness record by pedaling on a "stepper," an exercise machine that simulates climbing stairs, to set a record for the most steps done in 12 hours. But the feat was not recognized by Guinness because it wanted a different stunt.

"It's not just a hobby. I don't care if I bleed because I feel a sense of fulfillment when I perform the feats," said Caigoy.

DA warns of red tide in Ilocos mussels, oysters

LINGAVEN, BANGASINAN—THE

Department of Agriculture in the Ilocos region has advised against gathering and eating tahong (mussels), talabac (oysters) and other shellfish from Anda and Bolinao towns as these were found positive for red tide poisoning.

Domenden, in a letter to Gov. Victor Agbayani, said the results of the analysis of fresh shell meat samples showed that these were contaminated with poisons from red tide organisms.

Agbayani enjoined the mayors of the two towns to inform the public to "refrain from harvesting, gathering, transporting, mar-

keting and eating shellfish from their areas until further notice."

Domenden said, however, that fish harvested from the same areas are safe for human consumption, provided these are fresh and washed thoroughly and their internal organs, such as gills and intestines, are removed.

Records from the Bureau of

Fisheries and Aquatic Resources showed that mussels gathered in Lucenti and Luna villages in Bolinao and Siapar in Anda were positive for red tide poison.

"The local governments of Anda and Bolinao are monitoring the affected areas," Domenden said.

Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

had done.

Lee said the investigation must be based on scientific facts and not on mere speculations for results to be credible.

An independent study by the University of the Philippines' Natural Sciences Research Institute has confirmed previous findings made by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources that the mercury level in the coastal areas of Sorsogon was within tolerable level.

Lee challenged the commission to also conduct its own water, fish and sediment analysis, similar to what the provincial and city governments of Sorsogon

had done.

Lee said the investigation must be based on scientific facts and not on mere speculations for results to be credible.

An independent study by the University of the Philippines' Natural Sciences Research Institute has confirmed previous findings made by the Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources that the mercury level in the coastal areas of Sorsogon was within tolerable level.

The National Bureau of Investigation has already started looking into the source of the report as several officials and groups of fishermen demanded that those who started it be brought to justice and punished.

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

SSS DATA CAPTURE WORKSTATIONS

Supply, delivery and installation into operational state
294 units Data Capture Workstation

The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM (SSS) intends to apply the sum of P15,583,676.00 being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the proposed Data Capture Workstations, consisting of the following:

Item Description	Amount	Source of Fund
Item# 294 units Data Capture Workstations	P28,900,520.00	CY2006 Approved Budget for SSS D Card Project
Joint# 2: 3-year Maintenance Service after the required 2-year warranty period	P26,673,156.00	Budget for Ongoing Expenditures Maintenance & Repairs of Computer Equipment

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at bid opening.

2. The SSS now invites Bids from eligible bidders for the supply, delivery and set-up into operational state 294 units Data Capture Workstations. Delivery and installation of the GOODS are required within sixty (60) calendar days after contract signing/issuance of Purchase Order (PO). The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, Instruction to Bidders (ITB).

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9124 (RA 9124), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted in Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 3 83 (RA 3103) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section 1 of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB), who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P100,000.00. The method of payment will be on a cash basis payable at the SSS Cashiering Department, SSS Main Bldg., Ground Floor, upon accomplishment of SSS Form R-6. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The SSS will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on April 24, 2006 at 3:00 p.m., Green Room, 12th Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City.

7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered at the Green Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Main Building on May 19, 2006 not later than 3:00 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and amount indicated in the Bid Tender Document. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

8. Bid opening shall be held on May 19, 2006 at 3:00 p.m., Green Room, 2nd Floor, SSS Main Bldg., East Avenue, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the given address.

9. The SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to suspend the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Bid and Awards Committee

The Secretary
6th Floor SSS Main Building
East Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City
Tel # 922-2901, 924-7380; 920-6411, local 5491
Email - bsac@sssa.gov.ph
Facsimile number (02) 924-7380(Sgd.) THE CHAIRMAN
BIDS & AWARDS COMMITTEE

POB April 18, 2006

Chop-chop murders in Saudi

From page A1

The suspects were rounded up on April 11, seven days after body parts were found and the disappearance of the six Filipinos was reported.

In a phone interview last night, a DFA official quoting a report from the consulate in Jeddah said authorities had so far pieced together some of the body parts but that the corpse "did not look like a Filipino."

There was also "a hand" that did not match the other parts and which apparently belonged to another person, the official said.

It was not immediately known whether the body parts belonged to those who were reported missing.

The Philippine consulate in Jeddah has made representations with Brig. Gen. Mohamed Al-Zaanan of the Central Police Directorate.

As of yesterday, the DFA said, the mission was still awaiting a report it requested from the police concerning the condition of the Filipinos as well as the specific charges they could be facing.

Consul General Pendosina Lomondot had not been allowed to view the recovered body

parts either, the department said.

18 Filipino miners

On Monday the DFA reported that another group of Filipinos had been detained in Jeddah since last week, this time on allegations that they stole unprocessed gold from the mining company that employed them.

Eighteen Filipino miners working for the Saudi Arabian Mining Co. aroused suspicion when melted pieces of gold, bags of rocks and soil, and melting paraphernalia were found in their quarters during an inspection.

Spain lauds GMA for commuting death sentences

From page A1

statement, quoting the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation.

The statement was couched through Philippine Ambassador to Madrid Josep Bernardo.

"The situation of Mr. Larrañaga has been the object of maximum attention on the part of the different institutions of the Spanish state that has been all the time interested in his fate before the Philippine authorities," it said.

It cited the messages of concern issued by the Spanish king and then President Jose Aznar, as well as "the interest of the Parliament, and the personal representations of the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, the Minister of Defense, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

The Spanish government wishes to express its most sincere gratitude to the government of the Philippines, in particular to its President, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo," it added.

Abducted

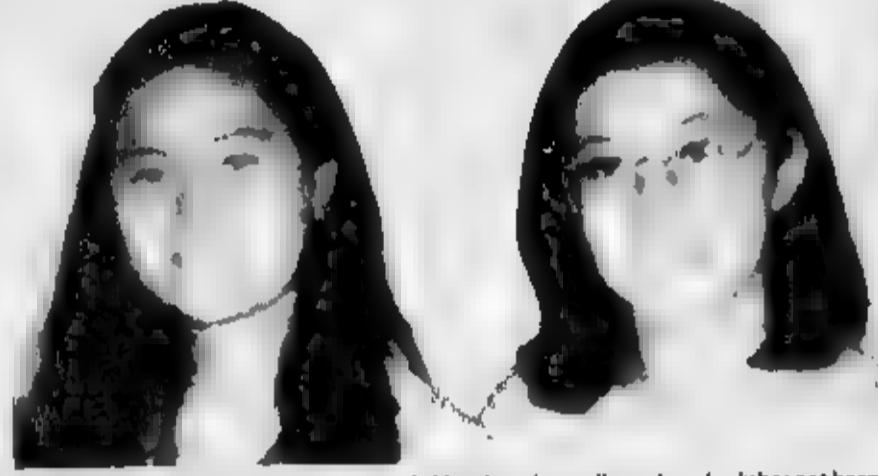
The Chuong sisters were abducted on the evening of July 16, 1997, while waiting for their father to pick them up at the Ayala Center Cebu.

The body of Marijoy, 20, was found two days later in a secluded ravine in the nearby town of Carcar.

Jacqueline, 23, has never been found.

Larrañaga's death sentence had drawn appeals for clemency from visiting Spanish delegations, among them lawmakers and diplomats, as well as other European groups opposed to the death penalty.

The lobbying apparently paid off early on. Last November, the Spanish newspaper El País reported that Ms Arroyo had assured then visiting Spanish Defense Minister Jose Bono that Larrañaga's death sentence would not be carried out "while she is President."



THE CHUONG SISTERS, Marijoy (left) and elder sister Jacqueline, whose body has not been found to this day, were abducted while waiting for their father to pick them up at Ayala Center Cebu.

CEBU DAILY NEWS

would benefit from the commutation, saying that his sentence had been affirmed and that he was "only waiting for the papers" from the high court.

Vinarao said the 81 convicts ready for commutation—among them four women—had been assigned to a separate cell in Building I.

"When the President hands down the commutation order, they will be ready to undergo the one-month physical and neuro-psychiatric orientation," he said.

Inmates' wish

An inmate, who requested anonymity for security purposes, said he and other death convicts with appeals pending in court were wishing that all 1,110 prisoners in Building 1 would be covered by the commutation.

"We are praying and hoping that the reprieve will not be discriminatory. We pray that even those whose sentences are under review will be included," he said.

The inmate said most of the convicts on death row were farmers and vendors from poor families who were convicted of kidnapping for ransom, murder and violation of the Dangerous Drugs Act.

Others were convicted of car theft with murder, highway robbery and paricide, he said.

"We and our families are really thankful to the President. Our relatives working abroad have sent e-mail messages to the Office of the President expressing our gratitude," the inmate said.

Moral high ground

"We also pray that the victims of the crimes we committed would have space in their hearts for forgiveness," he said.

A DFA official, who declined to be named because he was not authorized to speak to reporters, said the Spanish message praising Ms Arroyo for her move was a welcome development for Philippine foreign service officers lobbying to save Filipinos working overseas from death sentences.

He said the President's move put the Philippine government on a "moral high ground" in asking other states to spare the lives of condemned Filipinos for humanitarian reasons.

Gonzalez: I almost exonerated them

From page A1

utes," Gonzalez said. "There is no evidence of conspiracy."

Gonzalez's move, in effect, modified the resolution of the Olongapo City Prosecutor's Office holding the four US Marines criminally liable for conspiracy to commit rape.

Gonzalez said he would order the Department of Justice panel tasked to prosecute the Subic rape case to file a motion revising its charge sheet.

He said Smith remained as the principal accused not only because of the strong evidence against him, but also because Smith did not file a counter-affidavit to refute the charges against him. "He did not controvert the allegation against him by the victim," Gonzalez said.

The accused Marines have insisted that only one of them had sex with the woman, whose identity has been withheld upon her request, and that it was consensual.

The men are in the custody of the US Embassy. It has refused to hand them over to Philippine authorities, citing the Visiting Forces Agreement that gives American officials custody of US servicemen accused of crimes until the completion of their trial.

Legally incorrect

Evelyn Ursua, one of the private lawyers of the complainant, said Gonzalez's decision was "legally incorrect," pointing out that a suspect becomes an accessory for something done after or subsequent to the crime.

Ursua explained there are three conditions for a downgrade: When the suspect "profited" from the crime, when he concealed the effects or instruments of the crime to prevent its discovery, or helped in the escape of the principal accused.

What the three Marines did along with Smith in the van did not fall under these three conditions, Ursua told the Inquirer in a phone

interview.

"They were all there before, during and after the crime," she said. "They were cheering Smith on. They were all rowdy and inducing him to do it."

"So for me, it escapes my imagination how Secretary Gonzalez rationalized that decision," she said.

Victim disappointed

Ursua said the victim expressed "disappointment and frustration over what's happening when told of yesterday's development."

She said it further irked her that Gonzalez seemed to be "conditioning the mind of the public" in the days leading to yesterday's ruling, citing previous media reports quoting the DOJ's intention to downgrade the charge against the suspects.

Brickbats expected

Gonzalez said he anticipated brickbats from the victim's side and other women and cause-oriented groups.

"This is what I find in the evidence [of the case]. If they are not satisfied [with it], it does not bother me," he said.

The alleged rape had triggered anti-American protests by leftist groups at the US Embassy, using the incident as an issue to question Philippine ties with the United States.

On Monday, Gonzalez ordered a new preliminary investigation to look into the criminal liability of Timoiso Soriano, who was the driver of the Starex van the Marines rode in.

Soriano could be charged as an accomplice—penalized with 12 to 20 years' imprisonment.

"He was the driver and he must have known [what was taking place]. He could have reported it to the police authorities," Gonzalez said.

Robinsons Malls bring you the Mad Science series from the world's leading fun science provider.

Let Your Kids enjoy an exciting, hands-on and educational summer experience at the Robinsons Malls.

SHOW SCHEDULE

April 22-Pioneer

April 23-Galleria & Novaliches

May 1-Manila & Angeles

May 6-Pampanga & Sta. Rosa

May 7-Dasmariñas

May 13-Metro East

May 27- Imus & Lipa

Time: 4PM

Guaranteed to entertain both kids & adults alike!

For further inquiries, contact Ad & Promo Dept. 603100 loc. 780/782



plus

METRO

Editor Ester G. Dipasupit

Text us your feedback: inquirer net name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 263 (Smart) E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

Grim end for Good Samaritan

Vendor shot dead for helping 2 robbery victims in Las Piñas

By Jocelyn R. Uy

A GOOD SAMARITAN ENDED UP dead Monday night when he tried to help two women who had just been robbed in Las Piñas City.

Roberto Padilla, a sidewalk vendor, was shot in the head by one of three alleged holdup men on Real Street, Barangay Takon 2, Senior Insp. Gary Garen, station commander of the Police Communi-

ty Precinct 4, said.

In his report, Garen said Bernadette Tungol and her sister, Charmaine, had just left their lotto outlet a few minutes past 9 p.m. and were walking toward their car when three men held them up.

The robbers then fled with the bags of the two women which contained P2,600 in cash, a cellular phone worth P25,000, credit cards and ID cards.

When the women shouted for help, Garen said Padilla, who was standing nearby, immediately went after the robbers.

"He started hurling stones at the armed robbers. One of the suspects brandished a firearm and shot Padilla in the head," the police officer said in his report.

When Padilla fell on the pavement, the Tungols said they saw the three men

board a red motorcycle which sped off toward Zapote Road.

"Upon learning of the incident, all mobile units were notified for a dragnet operation. However, the suspects managed to escape," Garen said.

As of press time, police were still tracking down the the suspects.

Padilla's body, on the other hand, was brought to the Funeraria Filipinas for an autopsy.



Case files occupy steps leading to the offices of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court.

Cop in Sta. Rosa slay charged

By Tarry V. Quismundo

A POLICEMAN DETAILED TO THE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION POLICE OFFICE HAS BEEN CHARGED WITH MURDER IN CONNECTION WITH THE DEATH OF A PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER OF THE STA. ROSA, LAGUNA, GOVERNMENT.

Charged in the city prosecutor's office in Makati on Monday was PO3 Arnel Baguisi, formerly detailed to the NCRPO Regional Intelligence and Investigation Division's Antiterrorism Task Force. He has been on leave since the Feb. 18 shooting incident which left Jensen Cristobal, 31, dead.

Probers also recommended that Cristobal's girlfriend, Sandra Simondac, be investigated after they found out that they were together a few minutes before the victim was shot dead.

Cristobal was shot in a parking lot along President Sergio Osmeña Highway. Witnesses had told police that the gunman sped off aboard a black Honda Civic (UHD 416) shortly after the incident. Police later found out that the car was registered in Baguisi's name.

Upon further investigation, Baguisi turned out to be Simondac's former boyfriend. This was confirmed by Simondac who said she became Cristobal's girlfriend after she broke off with the policeman.

Investigators had requested a ballistic examination of the slugs recovered at the crime scene for comparison with bullets from Baguisi's registered firearm. The Southern Police District Crime Laboratory, however, said Baguisi's test bullets and cartridges were no longer in their files.

WHAT'S INSIDE



FDI/PHOTO

■ Fire destroys Senate records, computers

/A24

■ Holder of fake credit card nabbed inside QC supermarket

/A24

■ Trader loses P450,000 to 'helpful' woman

/A24

DISOBEDIENCE CAN COST A LIFE.

Road signs are meant to save lives.

We at Toyota believe that if we make our roads safer, not only do we save human lives, we move towards making both economic and social progress possible.

Save lives by observing road traffic safety. Join us in supporting the Society of Philippine Motoring Journalists' (SPMJ) "Early Warning" project on Road Traffic Safety Education of School Children and the Road Traffic Safety Conferences of the Automobile Association of the Philippines (AAP).



TOYOTA

DRIVING SAFETY

A24

Fake credit card holder nabbed

By Luigi del Puerto

POLICE HAVE ARRESTED AN Iranian after he was caught buying groceries with a bogus credit card at a supermarket in Quezon City. Police said the credit card's logo peeled off as the cashier was verifying the card, giving the con job away.

The police identified the Iranian as Mohammad Panahandeh, 46, who claimed to be a long-time resident of the Philippines, and married to a Filipino. He was described as a resident of Parañaque City.

Chief Supt. Pedro Tingo, deputy director of the PNP's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), said Panahandeh was paying for P6,600 worth of groceries using a Citibank Visa card at the ShopWise supermarket in Cubao, Quezon City, last Monday when his credit card was exposed as counterfeit.

When arrested, Panahandeh also yielded a Citibank Master Card and a driver's license issued

in Guam both bearing the name "Syros Borzo," police said. He also carried a ShopWise privilege card with the name "Ane Kakionoee."

A representative of the Credit Card Association of the Philippines confirmed that the cards were counterfeit. The police added that they were checking Panahandeh's alien registration papers.

Purchases

Police investigator Louie Lim said Panahandeh claimed to have gotten the credit cards from "a European" and that he was given 15 percent of the amount of his purchases using the fake cards.

The officer said Shop Wise was checking some P200,000 worth of purchases which might also have been made using fake credit cards.

Panahandeh would be charged with violating RA 8484 or the law on Access Devices Regulation, and Article 178 of the Revised Penal Code which prohibits the use of fictitious names, the CIDG said.



DANGER SIGN
A worker fixes a giant billboard along EDSA in Mandaluyong City unmindful of the danger of hanging from dizzying heights

EDWIN BACASMAS

Fire destroys Senate records, computers

By TJ Burgos and Jocelyn R. Uy

THE SENATE BUILDING WAS hit by an hour-long fire that damaged electronic equipment and personnel records before dawn yesterday.

Jose Balajadia Jr., the Senate sergeant-at-arms, said the fire broke out in the Human Resources Development Services of

ceiling on the fourth floor of the five-story Government Service Insurance System building which houses the Senate.

The

GSIS building is on Financial Center along Roxas Boulevard, Pasay City.

Balajadia ruled out arson in the incident. Based on the report of city fire officials, the blaze started when the "uninterrupted

power supply" (UPS), the standby electrical supply of computers at the HRDS, "short-circuited."

There

was no arson here. The UPS, which wasn't turned off, overheated. That started the fire," he said in a phone interview.

The fire began at around 2:30 a.m., more than seven hours after employees and legislative staff left the building, Balajadia

said. Responding firemen were able to put out the fire at around 3:45 a.m. Two computers, a table and a portion of the ceiling were damaged. Fire officials estimated the damage to property at P120,000.

Employees of other offices on the same floor were moved to the second floor when they reported for work later in the day.

METROBRIEFS

Six Manila cops face murder raps

THE DEPARTMENT of Justice yesterday filed charges against more than 10 men, six of them policemen, for allegedly kidnapping a Chinese businessman in 2004. Charged with kidnapping and robbery in the Manila Regional Trial Court were Insp. Carlos Perez Jr., P03 Jaime Aquino, P03 Wilhelm Castillo, P02 George Borabo, P02 Joseito Sebastian and P02 Rafaelito Corra, all detailed to the District Police Intelligence Unit of the Manila Police District. Also included in the charge sheet were Eric Sambajon, Joselito Quitoriano, Ange Magundibao and several John Does. The case was based on the complaint of victim Jose Tan Ong who claimed that the respondents, armed with firearms, arrested him on May 19, 2004 in Valenzuela City. Ong said he was taken to MPD headquarters on United Nations Avenue, Manila, where the police threatened to file drug charges against him if his family did not pay P10 million for his release. Ong said he haggled with the policemen who agreed to lower their demand to P2 million. Ong's wife later gave the money to the suspects.

Tina G. Santos

'Help' cost him P450,000

A MEAT dealer ended up losing P450,000 to a "decent-looking" woman who had volunteered to help him inside a bank in Marikina City yesterday morning. "I thought she was an employee of the bank. She was in corporate attire, which looked like a uniform. I was wrong to trust her," Reynaldo Fresno told the INQUIRER. Fresno, 47, said he was at the LandBank branch in Barangay San Roque at about 10 a.m. to deposit money into the account of his relatives in Antipolo. Since he was unfamiliar with the procedure, he asked around for help. The woman, in her 30s, volunteered to assist him and asked him to fill up several deposit slips. While he was filling up the forms, the woman volunteered to hold the plastic bag containing the money. Fresno said he was grateful for the offer as he was concentrating on filling up the forms as she had instructed. When he was done, the woman—whose name he did not get—was already gone along with his bag of money. The police said they would ask the bank workers for help in identifying the woman.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Perfect spot for meteor show

A "MUST SEE" spectacle the Lyrids meteor shower has been observed for more than 2,600 years and is described by experts as "stars falling like rain." Its peak will be in progress on the night of April 21 up to the early morning of April 22.

The best place to view the Lyrids is from a location of high altitude and with low pollution, experts said. Seven Suites Hotel Observatory in the foothills of Antipolo City is one such place. Its state-of-the-art telescope offers the viewing experience a though the naked eye is sufficient to witness the shooting stars. An in-house astronomer will be present to give guests a lecture on the Lyrids. Seven Suites Hotel Observatory is located in the Hollywood Hills Subdivision, Sumulong Highway in Antipolo City. For more information call 6820330 or 6822076.



ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ

Get a Drive Your Dream Auto Loan

But, as BPI Family

Introducing, the Drive Your Dream Auto Loan

BPI Family Savings Bank cares about your safety and peace of mind. That's why if you get a Drive Your Dream Auto Loan, you'll receive a package of free services from the Ibero Asistencia Group that you can't afford to miss.



*Towing services
Free with value up to
P 4000 in case of vehicle
breakdown



On-site car repairs
Engine jumpstart, battery boost,
tire change, gasoline delivery,
car lock-out.



Hotel stay
If the vehicle can't be repaired the
same day, you are covered for hotel
expenses up to P1000 for a
maximum of 2 nights.



BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK

Get started on tomorrow

To get your dream loan today, visit any BPI or BPI Family branch. You can also log on to www.bpiexpressonline.com or text AUTO<spa> example: "AUTO Manny Gomez 8456777"

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

The WORLD

A25

Thousands flee as Danube River floods most of southeastern Europe

ZRENJANIN, SERBIA-MONTENEGRO

Emergency workers used heavy machinery in a race against time Monday to build up defenses against flooded rivers threatening large swathes of southeastern Europe.

Thousands of villagers were forced to flee as floodwaters from the overflowing Danube River spread across southern Romania and completely submerged their homes, officials said.

In parts of the Balkans, the Danube recently reached its highest level in more than 100 years.

The dangerous tide of water has been moving eastward beyond Belgrade toward Bulgaria and Romania, where authorities deliberately flooded fields in a bid to spare towns after a similar situation there last year claimed dozens of lives.

Some 3,000 residents of the Romanian village of Rast were evacuated before the surging Danube entirely submerged their homes. Some 115 houses were completely destroyed and another 500 were damaged, local officials said.

Dolj district chief Nicolae Giugea said 10,000 residents of four villages in

the area were on standby for evacuation if the water continued to rise.

In Serbia, civil teams backed by the police force and army were reinforcing about 250 km of dikes lined with white sandbags on the bulging banks of several rivers.

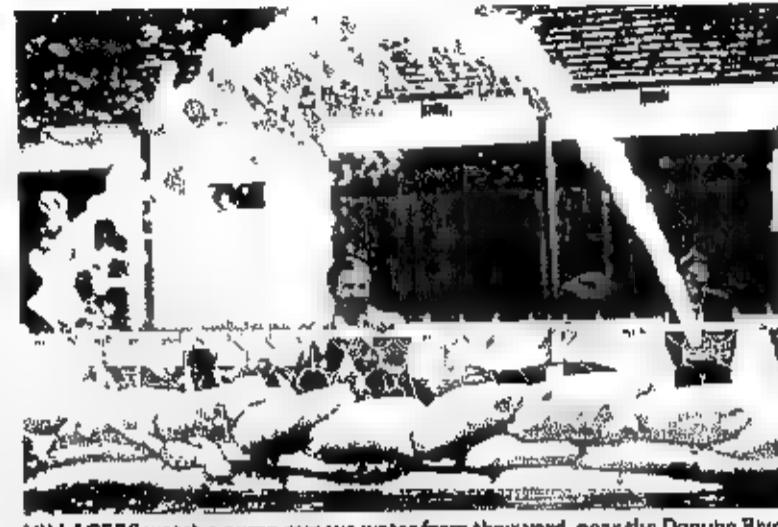
Using heavy earth-moving equipment, tractors and industrial trucks, the crews shored up the defenses of Venko Gradiste and Golubac, two Serbian towns on the border with Romania that are expected to bear the brunt of the flooded Danube within hours.

The situation was made worse by swelling Danube tributaries, including the Tisa and Begej rivers, which meet at the town of Titel north of the Serbian capital.

"I don't think I've ever seen the Tisa like this," said Milan, a 52-year-old resident of Titel.

Near Zrenjanin, about 70 km north of Belgrade, the only features that can be seen above the flooded plains are the road linking the town with the capital, and the tops of trees.

"Three hectares of my land is under water," said Ljubomir, a 43-year-old farmer from the area, in a flat and fertile region



VILLAGERS watch a pump remove water from their yard, near the Danube River, in the village of Ritepek near Belgrade April 17.

REUTERS

which is considered Serbia's breadbasket.

"I planned to sow wheat and corn, but who knows whether I will be able to sow anything if the water does not subside in the next four weeks."

The book has sold over 40 million copies.

The plot centers on the search by a man and woman team who use clues in Leonardo da Vinci's works in a hunt for the "Holy Grail." Christian leaders are up in arms over the novel's assertion that Jesus wed Mary Magdalene and sired her child.

The movie, which is being released by Sony Pictures division Columbia Pictures, stars Tom Hanks and premiered in May at the Cannes film festival in France. Sony Pictures is the media wing of Japanese electronics giant Sony Corp.

"We have no plans to reveal any details

A restaurant on the banks of the Tisa was surrounded by water, where a military vessel scraped sand from the bottom of the Begej, to be used for filling bags to protect embankments.

APP

regarding what is or isn't in the film until the release," a Sony Pictures spokesperson said in a statement.

Spokesperson Jim Kennedy noted Sony Pictures always viewed the movie as a "a work of fiction... a thriller not a religious tract. We believe the filmmakers are going to deliver an exciting movie that will delight audiences, not offend them."

Kennedy also noted that Sony Pictures is supporting a website, thedadvincicode.com, where interested people can read expert opinions about issues raised by the book and movie.

Reuters

WORLD BRIEFS

Bus crash kills 63 in Mexico

VERACRUZ, Mexico—At least 63 people died Monday after a bus they were riding veered off a mountain road in central Mexico and fell down a ravine, authorities said. "We have 63 people confirmed dead," Renaldo Marquez, head of regional rescue services, told V Radio. "Three (men) survived, they are in critical condition." The bus plunged 200 meters down into a ravine and rescue workers struggled to retrieve bodies from the remote location. "A lot of bodies, mostly of children, were lying all over," said David Betanzos Espinoza, civil defense director in the nearby town of Ixtaczoquitlán.

APP

9 killed in Tel Aviv bombing

TEL AVIV—The Israeli army raided the Gaza Strip late Monday hours after nine people were killed and dozens wounded in Israel's commercial capital Tel Aviv when a Palestinian bomber blew himself up in the deadliest suicide attack of the last 20 months. The bomb went off next to a fast-food stand at lunchtime in the southern Neve Shalom-Sha'anan district, close to the site of Tel Aviv's old bus station. The area has been the scene of several previous attacks, including one in January. The blast—the deadliest since a suicide bombing in August 2004—was claimed by the Palestinian militant group Islamic Jihad.

APP

Nepali troops fire on rallyists

KATHMANDU—Nepali troops opened fire on anti-monarchy protesters in an eastern town on Monday and killed one man, witnesses and officials said, as internal political pressure increased on King Gyanendra to restore multi-party democracy. It was the fifth person to be killed in 12 days of violent pro-democracy demonstrations that have brought the impoverished Himalayan nation to a standstill. Hundreds have been wounded. One person had been killed and five wounded, they said by telephone.

Reuters

US military deaths rise

WASHINGTON—US military deaths in Iraq have risen sharply in April after five straight months of decline. Last month there were 31 US military fatalities, the fewest since 20 died in February 2004, the lowest monthly toll of the 3-year-old war. So far this month, there have been at least 48 American fatalities, according to a count of military death announcements. Many of the deaths again occurred in Anbar province. There have been 2,378 US military deaths in the war, the Pentagon said.

Reuters

Opus Dei asks 'Da Vinci' film makers for respect

LOS ANGELES—CATHOLIC GROUP
Opus Dei has told Sony Pictures that putting a disclaimer on the upcoming movie "The Da Vinci Code" stressing it is a work of fiction would be a welcome show of respect toward the Church.

In the novel "The Da Vinci Code," on which the film is based, Opus Dei is characterized as a secretive group that has for centuries worked to obscure truths about Jesus Christ.

With the movie's opening a month away, Opus Dei and other Christian groups have been sponsoring websites telling people the

novel should not be believed.

A letter posted on Good Friday holiday on Opus Dei's website cites media reports as saying Sony Pictures may consider a disclaimer.

"An eventual decision of Sony in this direction would be a sign of respect toward the figure of Jesus Christ, the history of the Church, and the religious beliefs of viewers," the group said in the letter.

Written by Dan Brown, "The Da Vinci Code" book is a thriller in which the main characters must uncover clues they hope will lead them to an important religious secret. Their adversary is an Opus Dei member.

"We have no plans to reveal any details

and experience worry-free driving!



to Loan FREE Emergency Care Package!

With an Auto Loan from April 1, 2006 onwards, you can drive with confidence - no matter what happens on the road. Enjoy for the duration of your loan. So if you want a worry-free driving experience, get a Drive Your Dream Auto Loan.



Transport to destination

If the vehicle can't be repaired within 48 hours, you will be provided alternate means of transportation.



Powered by
IBERO
ASISTENCIA

For more information,
call the Ibero Hotline at 7522274 or 7514041

* Geographical coverage: NCR and key provincial cities
Free Emergency Care Package is co-terminous with the loan term
101 brand new cars only.

Drive your Dream
IBERO
AUTO LOAN
Emergency Care Package!

Savings Bank branch or Express Banking Center near you.
e>your full name<space>your landline number<space>city or province
Makati City" and send it to 0917-89100-00.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

World powers meet on Iran impasse

MOSCOW—WORLD POWERS held talks here Tuesday on how to keep Iran's nuclear program in check, with US calls for strong UN action meeting resistance from Russia and China and open defiance from Tehran.

Russian officials said the talks were private and provided no details on the agenda, though Western diplomats said the meeting of political directors from three European Union countries—the "EU 3"—along with China, Russia and the United States would take place at a working dinner.

The United States made clear ahead of the Moscow meeting

that it would continue to argue in favor of early and muscular action by the UN Security Council.

In a statement posted on its Moscow Embassy website, the United States said its representative at the meeting, Undersecretary of State for Political Affairs Nicholas Burns, "will discuss the need for significant action by the United Nations Security Council."

Washington accuses Tehran of working secretly to build nuclear weapons under cover of a nuclear energy program it is developing with Russian assistance. Iran denies the charge and says the program is strictly for producing nuclear energy.

The Moscow talks come after Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad last week announced that the Islamic state had mastered the nuclear fuel cycle and had successfully enriched a small amount of uranium for use as fuel for a nuclear power station.

Iran says it has the same right as any other country that has signed the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) to its own nuclear en-

ergy program and says it is prepared to allow close international supervision of this program by the UN nuclear regulatory agency.

The United States counters that Iran is a unique case because it failed to disclose key parts of its nuclear program for 18 years and because its leaders publicly call for the destruction of Israel.

The Security Council voted on March 29 to give Iran 30 days to suspend uranium enrichment work pending closer scrutiny by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) whose chief, Mohamed ElBaradei, must deliver a status report by the end of that period to the council.

All six parties represented at Tuesday's meeting say they share the goal of preventing Iran from acquiring the capacity to build nuclear weapons. They differ considerably however on how to achieve this goal.

The United States would like to see the Security Council begin imposing sanctions soon and has refused to rule out use of force against the Islamic republic.

The EU-3, which pursued negotiations for several years aimed at persuading Iran to steer clear of sensitive nuclear work, also supports sanctions but opposes military action.

Russia and China, both of

which have extensive commercial and strategic ties with Iran, insist that it is too early even to speak of sanctions, arguing that they will inevitably backfire.

"We are convinced that neither sanctions nor the path of force will lead to a resolution of the problem," Russian foreign ministry spokesperson Mikhail Kamynin said hours before the Moscow meeting was scheduled to start.

Iran meanwhile continued to talk tough.

President Ahmadinejad vowed in a speech in Tehran Tuesday that Iran would "cut off the hand of any aggressor."

APP

THIS PHOTO is one of the 20 images in Todd Heisler's Final Salute story that was awarded the 2006 Pulitzer Prize for feature photography. Minutes after her husband's casket arrived, Katherine Cathey fell onto the flag. When 2nd Lt. James Cathey left for Iraq, he wrote a letter to Katherine that read, in part, "there are no words to describe how much I love you, and will miss you. I will also promise you one thing: I will be home. I have a wife and a new baby to take care of, and you guys are my world."

Two Hurricane Katrina-hit newspapers win Pulitzers

NEW YORK—TWO NEWSPAPERS HARD-HIT by Hurricane Katrina won the top US journalism prizes on Monday for their coverage of the storm—even as the deadly water and wind damaged their offices and left many staffers homeless.

The Times-Picayune of New Orleans received the Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Reporting. It also shared the Pulitzer Prize for Public Service with The Sun Herald of Biloxi, Mississippi, for their handling of the Aug. 29 storm and aftermath.

The 90th annual Pulitzer Prizes in Journalism, Letters, Drama and Music were announced by Columbia University in New York City.

"The Board regards this as extraordinary work by two papers ... in the aftermath of Katrina, which is considered the nation's worst natural disaster," said Sig Gissler, Pulitzer Prize administrator.

The storm battered hundreds of miles of the US Gulf Coast, killing about 1,600 people and leaving hundreds of thousands of others homeless.

In New Orleans, 80 percent of which was flooded, most businesses have not reopened and many residents have not returned. Complaints have persisted that the federal government has failed to provide adequate relief.

The two award-winning newspapers provided their coverage even as they, too, suffered from the storm's wrath.

The New Orleans paper's offices were flooded, and many of its staffers were forced to flee, when the city's levees gave way. A makeshift newsroom was set up in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, about 80 miles away.

News of the prizes evoked tears and cheers from the reporters, editors and family members who gathered in the Times-Picayune newsroom in anticipation of the celebration.

"We have an extraordinary team of journalists and employees in this company who are absolutely dedicated to getting this paper out, no matter what the conditions are, people who lost their homes, who didn't know what had become of their families and who kept on working," said editor Jim Amos.

Biloxi's Sun Herald won "for its vigorous and comprehensive coverage of Hurricane Katrina, providing a lifeline for devastated readers," the Pulitzer Board said. The Public Service award is considered the most prestigious.

For photographs that "depicted the chaos and pain" of the hurricane, The Dallas Morning News won the Pulitzer Prize for Breaking News Photography.

Reuters

Pumped-up with values!

- Up to P10,000*
- Free gas from CALAX*
- Fast Processing
- Guaranteed Low Rates
- Flexible Payment Terms
- Earn BDO Rewards Points

Over P2 million in cash & prizes!
2 Grand lots of winners!

**SUPER LOANS,
SUPER PRIZES!**

Book a SuperCharged Auto Loan now and get a chance to be one of the 60 lucky winners!

Promo period March 1 to December 31, 2006. For DTI-NCR Permit No. 0400 Series of 2006.

Call 631-8000 or 1-800-10-6318000 (Domestic Toll Free) or visit any of our BDO or BDO On-site branches.

BDO Auto Loan

www.bancodeoro.com.ph



Abdon ties Alejandro for 36-hole lead

JIKIK ABDON BIRDIED THREE OF THE FIRST four holes on the way to a two-under-par 70 yesterday for a share of the boys' Class A lead with Mico Alejandro after the second round of the Callaway Junior World qualifying tournament of the Samsung Jungolf Tour.

Abdon turned in nines of 34-46 on four birdies and two bogeys as he forged a tie with solo first-round frontrunner Alejandro at 145 at Sherwood Hills Golf Club course in Trece Martires, Cavite.

Alejandro needed a birdie on the 18th to remain on top, finishing with a 73 in this 108-hole qualifier backed chiefly by Samsung, Philippine Airlines and Callaway. Mico Yee was 2 behind.

* Second round results.

Class A: Boys—145 Mico Alejandro 72-73, Jikik Abdon 75-70, 147 Mico Yee 74-73; Girls—152 Bambee dela Paz 77-75, 158 Debbie de Alba 81-77, 162 Kathleen Uy 81-81, 162 Sunshine Baracuet 84-78.

Class B (13-14): Boys—150 Wolen Superal 74-76, 161 Marcel Puyan 79-82, 163 Carlos Tinto 81-82; Girls—151 Cyne Rodriguez 76-75, 154 Ma. Pascio 75-79, Regine de Guzman 83.

Class C (9-10): Girls—147 Dolce Andina 76-71, 154 Katelyn Cruz 73-81, 155 Mean Legaspi 79-76 (Boys play suspended due to darkness)

Class D (9-10): Boys—148 JR Gonzales 88-79, Miggy Yee 76-72, 152 AR Ramos 76-78; Girls—165 Princess Superal 85-81, 160 Daniela Uy 86-84, 190 Felicia Medala 96-94.

Class E (7-8): Boys—126 Puper Zaragoza 65-61, 130 Justin Dy 67-63, 132 Raymart Tolentino 64-68; Girls—131 Rachita Aswendan 69-62, 139 Ma. Legaspi 67-72, 142 Banca Pagdanganan 71-71.

Class F (6 under): Boys—132 Shaiksh Vasandani 58-74, 146 Ryan Monsalve 78-60, 188 Mikael Robles 94-95; Girls—166 Chloe Flores 82-64, 180 Kristine Tomalba 87-69, 188 Asiah Alcom 91-67.



JOEL Solis of Hapee (left) battles for the rebound against Larry Rodriguez of Montaña in their game yesterday. ENRIKARAZAS

Aces Compton, Santos come to the rescue

By Jasmine W. Payo

ALEX COMPTON SHOT EIGHT OF HIS 16 points in extra time and the Montaña Jewels thwarted Hapee-PCU, 90-81, yesterday in the PBL Unity Cup at the San Andres Gym.

Still suffering from a nagging right calf injury, Compton powered the Jewels to the solo lead with their fifth win in six outings.

"He had a good game, I'm surprised that he played that well because he hasn't fully recovered," said Montaña coach Nei Parado.

Veteran forward Eric dela Cuesta also contributed 16 markers for the Jewels, who nearly came apart in the second half.

Earlier, Magnolia Ice Cream turned to Arwind Santos in the final period to quell Toyota Otis' late rally and post an 81-77 victory.

Heating up just in time, Santos unloaded 12 of his 17 points in the fourth canto after a relatively silent first three quarters.

"Arwind is like that, if you give him space to shoot, he'll take it," said coach Koy Banal after Magnolia improved its slate to 3-3. "He's composed and confident."

Kelly Williams also played true to form, col-

lecting 16 markers and 13 boards after a miserable shooting performance in his last game.

Toyota Otis slipped to second place and joined Rain or Shine at 4-2.

The Jewels also found it tough to secure the victory. Trailing by three in the dying seconds, it took a three-pointer by Robert Sanz in the last 7.1 ticks of regulation to give Montaña another shot at the solo leadership.

The scores:

First Game
MAGNOLIA 81—Santos 17, Williams 16, Valenzuela 15, Isip 12, Misolas 7, Chan 6, Barcellano 4, Jones 2, Rizal 2, Te 0, Co 0.

TOYOTA OTIS 77—Devance 29, Aldave 16, Aban 9, Andaya 8, Coronel 4, Casio 4, Lerong 3, Orela 2, Daa 2, Baluyot 0, Cababug 0, Bautista 0, Alcaraz 0.

Quarters: 20-15, 45-32, 62-48, 8-77

Second Game
MONTAÑA 88—Compton 16, dela Cuesta 16, Baguion 13, Bono 12, Junilla 10, Vergara 8, Rodriguez 6, Espiritu 4, Guerero 3, Magpaya 2, Evangelista 0.

HAPEE-PCU 61—Castro 19, Espinas 16, Moreno 11, Sant 10, Buco 9, Gonsales 6, Solis 4, Guevara 4, Balga 2, Canlas 1, Nallon 0, Razon 0, Garrido 0.

Quarters: 20-13, 40-28, 52-48, 66-68, 90-81



Give in. It'll cost you P 100,000 less.

Satisfy your urge for an SUV with Mazda Tribute. Get a P 50,000 discount for cash purchases, or choose between 0% interest and low down with low monthly financing – all with 1 Year Mazda Solutions! Tempted? Visit your nearest Mazda dealer now.



Driving my van became smoother.
Plus, my gas gauge didn't dip to empty.

MA. THERESA LAMONDO, CO-FOUNDER, PETRON GASOLINE



SPORTSWATCH

Last call for Coach E bets

THE COACH E Summer Basketball Tournament for participants six to 16 years old will be held on April 22-23 and 27. International Basketball Academy (IBA) president Xavy Nurag said individual and team entries can still join by calling 631-195 or 0921-7562639, or e-mailing the academy at iba_phl@yahoo.com. The tournament includes San Beda Manila, San Beda Taytay, San Beda Alabang, Southridge, Ateneo, Don Bosco, Antipolo Lady of Lourdes School and Xavier.

LSGH summer cage camp

THE SECOND module of the LSGH Summer Basketball Camp opens on May 1. The program is designed for elementary and high school students aged 7-17. Non-LSGHians are welcome to enroll. There are three courses offered: Beginner 2, Intermediate 2 and Team. Sessions will be held at the LSGH wooden courts from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. The camp will end on May 17. Registration fees is P2,000, inclusive of a reversible jersey. For inquiries, call 722-7717 or 721-2000 local 718.

Makati derby sets 70 fights

THE WT House Kristo 3-Cock Derby starts today at the Makati Coliseum with 70 matches on tap. The derby, sponsored by B-Meg Derby Ace, will feature prized gamblers of Toto Lacson, Boy Javier, Jake Macasaet, Lito Grillazo, Rudy Salud, William Co, Magdangal Bima, Leo Magpantay, Gerry Faros, Aying Keh, Terry Santos, Emil Chua, Edwin Villal, Ferdie Eusebio, Vandoll Go, Butch Oland, Amor Salvadora, Toto Sevilla, Ram Lopez, Ceser Tangco, Gerry Sunga and Michael San Pablo. For inquiries, call 896-3645 or 895-6475.

GCAP 5-cocker series today

THE GENTLEMEN Cocker Association of the Philippines (GCAP) 5-cock derby series resumes at the San Juan Coliseum today with 70 fights on the roster. Rep. Butch Pichay and Rep. Briones' Spartan's Pichay (19 points) lead the GCAP Cocker of the Year race of the series sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. They will be challenged by Jun Topacio (JT) Emerald Complexor 3000, (18), Patrick Antonio (Sagupaan Complexor 3000, 15.5), Louie Gua (LCC Leonard, 15.5), Gerry Ramos (Against All Odds, 15.5) and Manny Pacquiao and Antonio (Super Pacman Sagupaan, 15).

Race 1—(Or/Tr)—Empire Trish (5), Skip Away (3), Pullan Beauty (Toppy Again) (1), Awesome Power (7).
Race 2—(Panabatang Tr)—Collective Dreams (8), Playing Cool (3), Wizard Warfar (2), Sir Dillon (10), Eden's Quasi (7).
Race 3—(Or/Tr)—Sound Value (3), 11 Amores (2), Better Stride (6), Top Ol' D-Line (8).
Race 4—(Panabatang Tr)—Hard To Find (2), John (8), Lucky Joe (4), Vitality (1), Apple Splash (3).
Race 5—(Panta/Or/Tr)—Mankin's Style (Magpantayahan) (6), Renzo Says (1), War Bird (3), Hader Pleasant (9), Wild Bill (3).
Race 6—(Panta/Or/Tr)—Re-mail (2), Streisand (5).

BY TOP CHOICE

Bambini (3), Truly Impressive (10), Reason To Believe (8), Strawdarius (14), Worth Us White (5).
Race 7—(Panta/Or/Tr)—Mr. Vickery (7), Cash Feeder (3), Sharp Cookies (1), Irish Cormotion (6), Classy Pages (3).
Race 8—(SuperDarts)—Magical Dance (12), West W Wild (1), Dazzle Breeze (9), Angel Eyes (10), Re-mail (2), Streisand (5).

Loyzaga returns to a lost kingdom

THE GREAT CARLOS LOYZAGA MAY have not realized it. But, unlike Flash Eorde who, years after his death finally had a successor in Manny Pacquiao, Loyzaga's kingly reign on Philippine basketball has remained intact.

Nobody among the slew of big-time pros has proved worthy enough to take over the throne.

OK, there were more colorful, wealthier pretenders to the kingship.

Robert Jaworski definitely led the contenders.

The Big J, who went on to become a senator, was easily the biggest draw in the history of Philippine basketball.

He starred at a time when the basketball fever was at its most intense here. The game, a national passion, was lapped up like religion by team fanatics who never hesitated to worship their idols on the hardcourt.

But did Jaworski or any of other big names—Mon Fernandez, Avin Patromino, Danny Ildefonso, etc.—come close to unseating King Caloy?

Sorry, but despite the multimillion-peso price tags of these challengers, the crown would not fit.

Loyzaga paid dear old Manila a visit some two weeks back and was treated to a regular basketball show by star players, both of the native and Fil-Am variety.

Did he find time to wonder why nobody has succeeded him?

OK, there were more than enough celebrities, but they could, at best, be ranked only as that, big names.

If these instant millionaires made any difference, it was in the entertainment value they would dish out in games where self-preservation was often the central theme.

Well, Loyzaga was himself a superstar, but he was the rarest of celebrities.

If he ever shone bright, like the sun itself, it was because of selfless gallantry on the hardcourt, mainly in international campaigns.

He shone at a time when the game was played by hardcourt soldiers with fire in their bellies.

It was the golden era of Philippine basketball. Loyzaga played tall, fueled by heroic temper, and neither would be stammer nor hesitate to risk

BARE EYE



Recab Trinidad

hairdo or limb in crucial physical battles.

Years after Loyzaga's retirement, expectant fans would be advised that nobody among the guttering rich stars in the PBA could hold a candle to the King.

A likely successor should be one possessed with the finest qualities of Philip Cesar and Fernandez during their height, although the proposed Caloy clone would still fall short.

Caloy Loyzaga, an original, would be impossible to copy.

Nobody ever again presided over great games here with the pure poise, grace and regal bearing of King Caloy.

Luminous in the famous red jersey of the Yeo Painters, whose dynastic reign Loyzaga pillarized like El Cid, he was handsome heroism personified, a tall, pigeon-chested monarch standing erect, unperturbed amidst the regular hysteria and bedlam at the old Rizal Coliseum, the original basketball mecca.

The kingship, still alive, was anything but symbolic.

For a brief review of his greatness, Loyzaga, originally with the San Beda Red Lions, first donned the national jersey in 1951, when the Philippines won the basketball championship in the first Asian Games in India. However, he started stealing the fancy of sports fans in 1954, when he spearheaded the title defense for the RP team in the second Asian Games in Manila. That same year, he powered the Philippine squad to a historic third-place finish in the World Basketball Championship in Rio de Janeiro.

That fabled national squad, coached by Herr Silva, was brilliantly skippered by the great Lauro "The Fox" Munar.

However, it was Loyzaga's superb

all-around might and dexterity that earned him a Mythical Team berth of the 1954 world tournament.

Would he have made it to the NBA with his worth and credentials?

Why not? If he had been invited to play for Brazil's world-famous Flamengo team, that should have more than confirmed his big stature as an internationalist.

Nobody here has come close to becoming another Great Difference, the real thing.

The King, now 75, returned appearing more portly. After a quadruple bypass, the once princely looks gone, he now looked more like a pope.

Still, Loyzaga should have been accorded a welcome befitting a returning monarch.

Instead, what he came to observe upon arrival was a dismal scenario. Everything he had fought for, the basketball kingdom itself, has been razed to the ground.

Keep your act together, Loyzaga advised the warring power players in Philippine basketball.

Of course, he was asking for the impossible.

The PBA which had to be banned due to lack of direction and a horrendous record, that included the RP flag being treated like garbage in international meets, continued to enjoy the patronage of the international body.

The Great Difference had every reason to be greatly dismayed.

In fact, those who were in Seou (for the meeting between Fiba sec gen Patrick Baumann and Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Coquangco) claimed they had reason to suspect the gender soundness of decision-makers in the international basketball federation.

They also asked: Whose heart melted when the eyes of one top Fiba man met the soulful stare of a familiar Asian in an earlier conference?

King Caloy, of course, has stopped asking questions.

He knows there could be hope again only after Philippine basketball is taken out of the sissy grip of fake, squatting leaders and restored to the hands of true men with honor, integrity and pure heroic hearts.

SAN Miguel Beer's Dorian Pe game. Pe is one of five Beers

Mantawi Iloilo Wa

STANDINGS	W	L
V SAYAS DIVISION		
M Lihiwet-Cebu	3	0
Masters-Toledo	2	1
Mantawi Traders	1	2
Toyota-Iloilo	0	3
West Negros	x	x
MINDANAO DIVISION		
Iligan City	6	1
Pac-Man-GenSan	5	2
P Pharma-MisOr	4	4
Montana-Davao	4	4
Cagayan de Oro	0	8
* still playing at press time		

HOPE & Winston

1st Prize 2 units
Mercedes-Benz SLK 300

Photos shown may vary from actual prizes

Cash prizes for store/outlet winners

1st Prize 2 winners
P50,000.00

2nd Prize 4 winners
P25,000.00

3rd Prize 5 winners
P10,000.00

4th Prize 10 units
Sony Mini DV Camer
DSC-H200

5th Prize 40 units
Sony PSP
(Playstation Portable)

5th Prize 60 units
Oakley Flare
300

Consolation Prizes
Hope & Winston cigarettes

Prize exclusively for all
Hope & Winston variants only
Not for sale in minors

DRAW DATE
July 14, 2006

PBA

Finals
Basketball

ABC
Barley

Government Warning: Cigarette s

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

SPORTS

Kenya's dominate Boston marathon

BOSTON—KENYA'S ROBERT CHERUIYOT SET a course record on the way to winning the second Boston Marathon on Monday, while compatriot Rita Jeptoo strode to victory in the women's race.

2003 champion Cheruiyot, facing the largest field of top US runners in more than two decades, pulled ahead in the latter stages to overtake fellow Kenyan Benjamin Malyo and American Meb Keflezighi, lowering the course record by a second.

"I thought maybe I was going to slow down but I was very strong," Cheruiyot told a news conference after winning the \$100,000 winner's

prize and another \$25,000 for setting the record.

It was the 14th time in the last 16 years that a Kenyan has won the world's oldest annual contested marathon.

The 27-year-old finished the 110th edition in an official time of two hours, seven minutes and 14 seconds, beating the previous record set by fellow Kenyan Cosmas Ndeti in 1994.

Kenya's Malyo finished second in 2:08:21 and Keflezighi, who was born in Eritrea, third, in 2:09:56. Americans Brian Sell finished in fourth place and Alan Culpepper in fifth.

In the women's field, Jeptoo overtook last

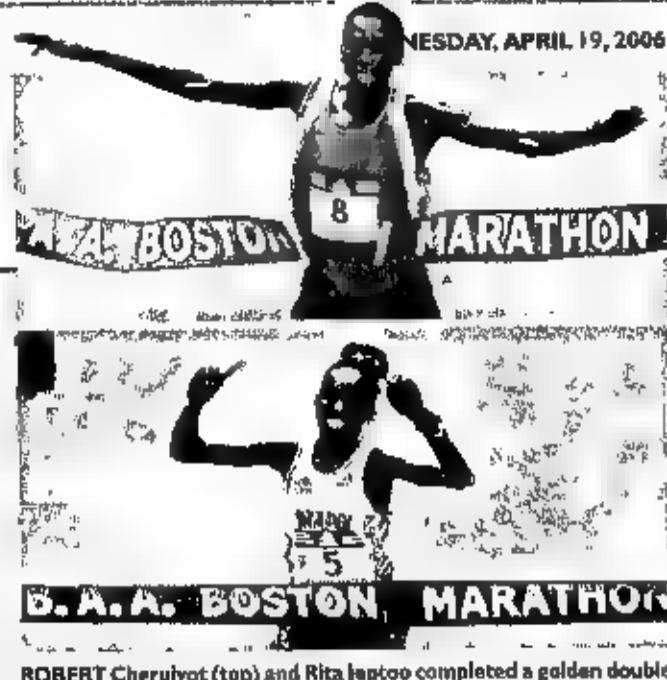
year's New York City Marathon winner Jelena Prokopenko of Latvia and Reiko Tosa of Japan who dominated the first half of the race.

"I'm happy so much," said the 25-year-old Jeptoo, wearing her green wreath over tinted red hair wound in a bun.

Jeptoo, who won the women's race in her first attempt at a US marathon, clocked an official time of two hours, 23 minutes, 38 seconds, becoming the third straight Kenyan woman to win the race.

Her time fell short of the women's course record of 2:20:43 set by Margaret Okyoko of Kenya in 2002.

Reuters



ROBERT Cheruiyot (top) and Rita Jeptoo completed a golden double for Kenya when they emerged triumphant in the 110th running of the Boston Marathon, the world's oldest marathon.

Baldness: Restore Your Hair at Svenson!

"My wife would joke that I was the easiest to find in a group because of my shiny balding head. It hurt, but it was true. I tried on a wig but it looked fake. With Svenson's Hair Integration Method, I feel more confident about my looks. People who see my hair can't believe how real it is. Now, without a trace of baldness, my wife finds it hard to identify me in a crowd!"

Gil Beltran
Insurance Underwriter



Svenson
INTERNATIONAL
End Your Hair Loss Misery Today
Call 892-HAIR (4247)

MAKATI 10/F Tomas Morato Bldg. BINONDO 4/F GTC Tower, 10/F GTC Center ALABANG 4/F Citibank-Fortuna Bldg. TEL: 234-0851 7/F Keppel Centre

16/F GT Tower, 10/F GTC Center

ALABANG
TEL: 234-0851
7/F Keppel Centre

16/F GT Tower, 10/F GTC Center

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

FEEDBACK

Easy, girl

From Lisa
(meltsafel@ya-
hoo.com) Makati
City

City
Heart Evangelista
sucks! She's so mate-
rialistic? All she talks
about is the brand
and the brand It
sucks! Somebody
should tell her to
shut up! Not all peo-
ple can afford those
things Her manager
Angel should warn
her.

Why, thanks.

From Mystica
(mystica_cas-
sidy@yahoo.com
mailto:mystica_cas-
sidy@yahoo.com)

Quezon City
Thanks for the support and all those nice comments! Will send more highlights of "Sha... We Dance"

Bad trip
From Edna Estil-
lore (jhane-
lah05@yahoo.com)
Landmass Commer-

Landmass Communi-
cia. Park
Nekuqamad na
manood ng "Eat
Bu aga!" dahil sa so-
brang exposure na
binuwigay nha sa ab-
normal, na si Sugar.

TOM CRUISE

MIAMI VICE

THE MISSION BEGINS 05:03:06

13

MissionImpossible.com

10

Distributed by *Solar Entertainment Corporation*

A black and white movie poster for 'Tristan & Isolde'. The poster features a close-up, high-contrast image of two faces, James Franco on the left and Sophia Myles on the right, looking intensely at each other. The title 'TRISTAN & ISOLDE' is prominently displayed at the bottom in large, bold, serif capital letters. Below the title, the names 'JAMES FRANCO' and 'SOPHIA MYLES' are written in a smaller, sans-serif font. The poster is framed by a dark border. At the very top, there is a small box containing the MTRCB rating 'R-13' and a note 'STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE'.

A high-contrast, black and white promotional photograph of three young men. The man on the left is Dennis Trillo, wearing a dark t-shirt. The man in the center is Paolo Contis, wearing a light-colored t-shirt. The man on the right is Marian Rivera, wearing a dark t-shirt. They are all looking directly at the camera with serious expressions. The background is dark and textured. The title 'PAMA HIN' is printed in large, bold, white letters across the bottom of the poster. Above the title, the names of the lead actors are listed: 'Dennis Trillo', 'Paolo Contis', and 'Marian Rivera'. Below the title, the names of supporting cast members are listed: 'Vangie Lalaban', 'Chris Daluz', 'Keekoe Gonzales', 'Erica Dehesa', and 'Jaclyn Jose'. The poster also features the text 'Directed by Ralphyan Carlos' and 'OPENING IN THEATERS NATIONWIDE'. Logos for 'EPSON', 'NoCopyright', and 'www.regalfilms.com/pamahin' are visible in the bottom right corner.

Catch the stars of **PAMAHIN** on **APRIL 19** at **SM Bacoor, 4pm**
and on **APRIL 23** at **SM NORTH EDSA, 4pm**

HOLLYWOOD'S FIRST BIG SUMMER MOVIE FOR 2006

WE'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU

19. *Leucosia* (Leucosia) *leucostoma* (Fabricius) (Fig. 19)

OPEN APRIL 21

SILENT HILL

BASED ON THE #1 SURVIVAL GAME FROM KONAMI

THE ONLY CINEPLEX IN THE COUNTRY

Gateway Cinplex*10

Alimall

farmersPlaza

Gateway Cinplex*10

Alimall Cinemas

ARANETA CENTER

ARANETA COLISEUM

PBA PHILIPPINE CUP

Apr 19 4:40 AIR 21 vs SAN MIGUEL

wed. 7 35 COCA COLA vs PUREFOODS

SANTANA ROOTS... GREG ROLIE LIVE!

APRIL 28, Friday 8 pm

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD CINEMAS MOVIE GUIDE



CINEMA ACCESS
635-5555
FOR ALL BRANCHES

www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

GALELLA

1 ICE AGE 2 • THX 6 EIGHT BELOW

2 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE 7 D' LUCKY ONES

3 SUBMERGED 8 AMERICAN SOLDIER

4 MOMENTS OF LOVE 9 BANDIDAS

5 PAMAHIN 10 BASIC INSTINCT 2

ERMITA

1 PAMAHIN

2 ICE AGE 2 5 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

3 D' LUCKY ONES 6 SUBMERGED

4 THE COOLER 7 EIGHT BELOW

METRO EAST

1 ICE AGE 2 5 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

2 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 6 EIGHT BELOW

3 MOMENTS OF LOVE 7 D' LUCKY ONES

4 AMERICAN SOLDIER 8 PAMAHIN

NOVALICHES

1 PAMAHIN 4 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

2 THE HILLS HAVE EYES 5 EIGHT BELOW

3 BASIC INSTINCT 2 6 D' LUCKY ONES

CITISQUARE MALABON

1 PAMAHIN 1 PAMAHIN

2 D' LUCKY ONES 2 EIGHT BELOW

3 RESERVE 3 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

4 RESERVE 4 D' LUCKY ONES

Summer Movie Treat

BEAT the HEAT at the MOVIES

2 movie tickets for the price of 1

APRIL 16 to MAY 16
ANY MOVIE
Mondays thru Fridays
(except Wednesdays)

the coolest thing this summer!

Participating Branches:
Novelchess, Daemorato, Imus, Bul. Rizal,
San Fernando, Pangil, and Bata

See Posters and Flyers for details

STAR ROSA

1 PAMAHIN 1 ULTRAVIOLET

2 D' LUCKY ONES 2 THE HILLS HAVE EYES

3 EIGHT BELOW 3 PAMAHIN

4 TRISTAN AND ISOLDE 4 D' LUCKY ONES

5 EIGHT BELOW 5 EIGHT BELOW

6 EIGHT BELOW 6 EIGHT BELOW

7 EIGHT BELOW 7 EIGHT BELOW

8 EIGHT BELOW 8 EIGHT BELOW

9 EIGHT BELOW 9 EIGHT BELOW

10 EIGHT BELOW 10 EIGHT BELOW

11 EIGHT BELOW 11 EIGHT BELOW

12 EIGHT BELOW 12 EIGHT BELOW

13 EIGHT BELOW 13 EIGHT BELOW

14 EIGHT BELOW 14 EIGHT BELOW

15 EIGHT BELOW 15 EIGHT BELOW

16 EIGHT BELOW 16 EIGHT BELOW

17 EIGHT BELOW 17 EIGHT BELOW

18 EIGHT BELOW 18 EIGHT BELOW

19 EIGHT BELOW 19 EIGHT BELOW

20 EIGHT BELOW 20 EIGHT BELOW

21 EIGHT BELOW 21 EIGHT BELOW

22 EIGHT BELOW 22 EIGHT BELOW

23 EIGHT BELOW 23 EIGHT BELOW

24 EIGHT BELOW 24 EIGHT BELOW

25 EIGHT BELOW 25 EIGHT BELOW

26 EIGHT BELOW 26 EIGHT BELOW

27 EIGHT BELOW 27 EIGHT BELOW

28 EIGHT BELOW 28 EIGHT BELOW

29 EIGHT BELOW 29 EIGHT BELOW

30 EIGHT BELOW 30 EIGHT BELOW

31 EIGHT BELOW 31 EIGHT BELOW

32 EIGHT BELOW 32 EIGHT BELOW

33 EIGHT BELOW 33 EIGHT BELOW

34 EIGHT BELOW 34 EIGHT BELOW

35 EIGHT BELOW 35 EIGHT BELOW

36 EIGHT BELOW 36 EIGHT BELOW

37 EIGHT BELOW 37 EIGHT BELOW

38 EIGHT BELOW 38 EIGHT BELOW

39 EIGHT BELOW 39 EIGHT BELOW

40 EIGHT BELOW 40 EIGHT BELOW

41 EIGHT BELOW 41 EIGHT BELOW

42 EIGHT BELOW 42 EIGHT BELOW

43 EIGHT BELOW 43 EIGHT BELOW

44 EIGHT BELOW 44 EIGHT BELOW

45 EIGHT BELOW 45 EIGHT BELOW

46 EIGHT BELOW 46 EIGHT BELOW

47 EIGHT BELOW 47 EIGHT BELOW

48 EIGHT BELOW 48 EIGHT BELOW

49 EIGHT BELOW 49 EIGHT BELOW

50 EIGHT BELOW 50 EIGHT BELOW

51 EIGHT BELOW 51 EIGHT BELOW

52 EIGHT BELOW 52 EIGHT BELOW

53 EIGHT BELOW 53 EIGHT BELOW

54 EIGHT BELOW 54 EIGHT BELOW

55 EIGHT BELOW 55 EIGHT BELOW

56 EIGHT BELOW 56 EIGHT BELOW

57 EIGHT BELOW 57 EIGHT BELOW

58 EIGHT BELOW 58 EIGHT BELOW

59 EIGHT BELOW 59 EIGHT BELOW

60 EIGHT BELOW 60 EIGHT BELOW

61 EIGHT BELOW 61 EIGHT BELOW

62 EIGHT BELOW 62 EIGHT BELOW

63 EIGHT BELOW 63 EIGHT BELOW

64 EIGHT BELOW 64 EIGHT BELOW

65 EIGHT BELOW 65 EIGHT BELOW

66 EIGHT BELOW 66 EIGHT BELOW

67 EIGHT BELOW 67 EIGHT BELOW

68 EIGHT BELOW 68 EIGHT BELOW

69 EIGHT BELOW 69 EIGHT BELOW

70 EIGHT BELOW 70 EIGHT BELOW

71 EIGHT BELOW 71 EIGHT BELOW

72 EIGHT BELOW 72 EIGHT BELOW

73 EIGHT BELOW 73 EIGHT BELOW

74 EIGHT BELOW 74 EIGHT BELOW

75 EIGHT BELOW 75 EIGHT BELOW

76 EIGHT BELOW 76 EIGHT BELOW

77 EIGHT BELOW 77 EIGHT BELOW

78 EIGHT BELOW 78 EIGHT BELOW

79 EIGHT BELOW 79 EIGHT BELOW

80 EIGHT BELOW 80 EIGHT BELOW

81 EIGHT BELOW 81 EIGHT BELOW

82 EIGHT BELOW 82 EIGHT BELOW

83 EIGHT BELOW 83 EIGHT BELOW

84 EIGHT BELOW 84 EIGHT BELOW

85 EIGHT BELOW 85 EIGHT BELOW

86 EIGHT BELOW 86 EIGHT BELOW

87 EIGHT BELOW 87 EIGHT BELOW

88 EIGHT BELOW 88 EIGHT BELOW

89 EIGHT BELOW 89 EIGHT BELOW

90 EIGHT BELOW 90 EIGHT BELOW

91 EIGHT BELOW 91 EIGHT BELOW

92 EIGHT BELOW 92 EIGHT BELOW

93 EIGHT BELOW 93 EIGHT BELOW

94 EIGHT BELOW 94 EIGHT BELOW

95 EIGHT BELOW 95 EIGHT BELOW

96 EIGHT BELOW 96 EIGHT BELOW

97 EIGHT BELOW 97 EIGHT BELOW

98 EIGHT BELOW 98 EIGHT BELOW

99 EIGHT BELOW 99 EIGHT BELOW

100 EIGHT BELOW 100 EIGHT BELOW

101 EIGHT BELOW 101 EIGHT BELOW

102 EIGHT BELOW 102 EIGHT BELOW

103 EIGHT BELOW 103 EIGHT BELOW

104 EIGHT BELOW 104 EIGHT BELOW

105 EIGHT BELOW 105 EIGHT BELOW

106 EIGHT BELOW 106 EIGHT BELOW

107 EIGHT BELOW 107 EIGHT BELOW

108 EIGHT BELOW 108 EIGHT BELOW

109 EIGHT BELOW 109 EIGHT BELOW

110 EIGHT BELOW 110 EIGHT BELOW

111 EIGHT BELOW 111 EIGHT BELOW

112 EIGHT BELOW 112 EIGHT BELOW

113 EIGHT BELOW 113 EIGHT BELOW

114 EIGHT BELOW 114 EIGHT BELOW

115 EIGHT BELOW 115 EIGHT BELOW

116 EIGHT BELOW 116 EIGHT BELOW

117 EIGHT BELOW 117 EIGHT BELOW

118 EIGHT BELOW 118 EIGHT BELOW

119 EIGHT BELOW 119 EIGHT BELOW

120 EIGHT BELOW 120 EIGHT BELOW

121 EIGHT BELOW 121 EIGHT BELOW

122 EIGHT BELOW 122 EIGHT BELOW

123 EIGHT BELOW 123 EIGHT BELOW

124 EIGHT BELOW 124 EIGHT BELOW

125 EIGHT BELOW 125 EIGHT BELOW

126 EIGHT BELOW 126 EIGHT BELOW

127 EIGHT BELOW 127 EIGHT BELOW

128 EIGHT BELOW 128 EIGHT BELOW

129 EIGHT BELOW 129 EIGHT BELOW

130 EIGHT BELOW 130 EIGHT BELOW

FOXTROT

BY BILL Amend A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA



MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG

BY P.M. JUNIOR



BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT

BY PATRICK McDONNELL



ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCIELANO

BY STEVEN PABALINAS



HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have lots of enthusiasm for life. You're an excellent communicator. Because you're competitive and hard-working, it's important for you to reach the success you want. You're assertive, mentally sharp and a strong beginner. You dislike things. Your ideas sometimes lead to big money! Work hard this year to build and construct something important. Your payoff will come in 2007.

BIRTHDATE: Luis Miguel Basteri, singer; Ashley Judd, actress; Tim Curry, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Make vacation plans or long-term arrangements for the education of children. You might also want to plan how you can explore creative hobbies (i.e., what you need to buy, etc.).

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Listen to wise advice from someone older and more experienced. After all, you don't have to reinvent the wheel. Why not learn from the mistakes of others? (It's easier and cheaper!)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Travel plans are exciting. Now is the time to settle the deal. Consider to a future trip somewhere or perhaps future educational opportunities. You might also make long-term plans connected with publishing.

Taurus (April 20 to May 20): Tackle routine work that requires research, concentration and attention to detail. You will do very well at this kind of task today. (Your mind is ready for this sort of thing.)

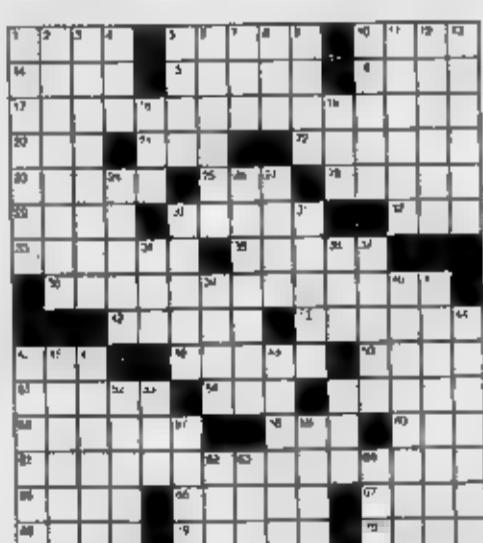
CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Discussions with bosses, parents and VIPs are fruitful and productive today. People are really impressed with what you have to say. You speak with wisdom and foresight. (Impressive.)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Settle disagreements about shared property, inheritances and estates today. You might also want to finalize details relating to insurance matters.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- Industrial pollution: club
- "Butterfield 8" author
- Speedy
- Goals
- More docto
- Debate side
- Way to go back and forth
- Amusement
- Negative link
- "Dallas"
- "Martha" or "Normal"
- Uganda's Amin
- "Slutty Players" painter
- Religious custom
- River through Grenoble
- Air-boat sound
- Tool devices
- Aquarium bottom-feeder
- Way to go in and out
- Arab leader
- Flexible
- Half a dance?
- Benai
- Model Macpherson
- Stoppage
- "Cheers" setting
- Snooped
- Bowers
- Night before
- Long-snouted fish
- Way to go up and down
- Bhutanese shelter
- Chess
- Calais sunburn
- God of love
- Player and Oldman
- Fewer
- DOWN
- Carry out
- Roulette employee

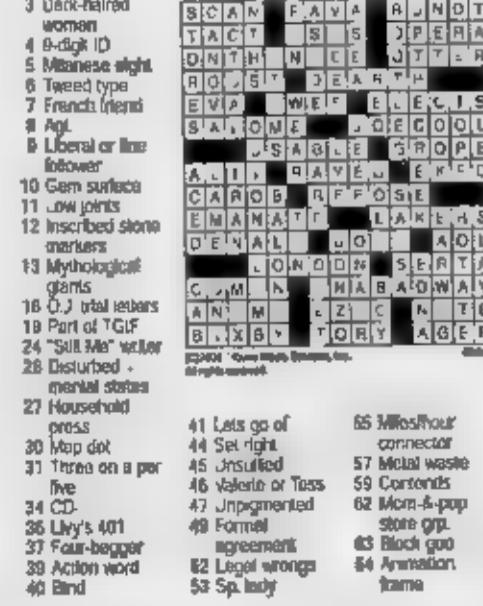


By Philip J. Anderson

Portland, OR

4/19/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved



SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're willing to work hard or rather routine, dull work today. Capitalize on this influence. Get as much done as you can, because your powers of concentration are excellent!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might receive wise advice from someone about financial speculation today. Similarly, you might be advised about professional sports and dealing with children.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You'll be very efficient tackling home repairs or fixing what is broken today. Family discussions about someone's long-term security will be productive.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're very serious-minded today. You won't waste time on frivolous things. You want to discuss what is important; you need to plan for the future.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You feel financially frugal today. If you spend money, it will be for something practical and long-lasting. You want to get good value for your hard-earned dollar.

KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



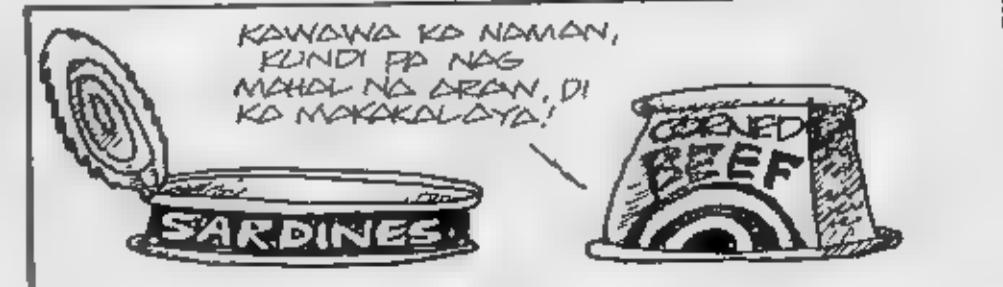
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING

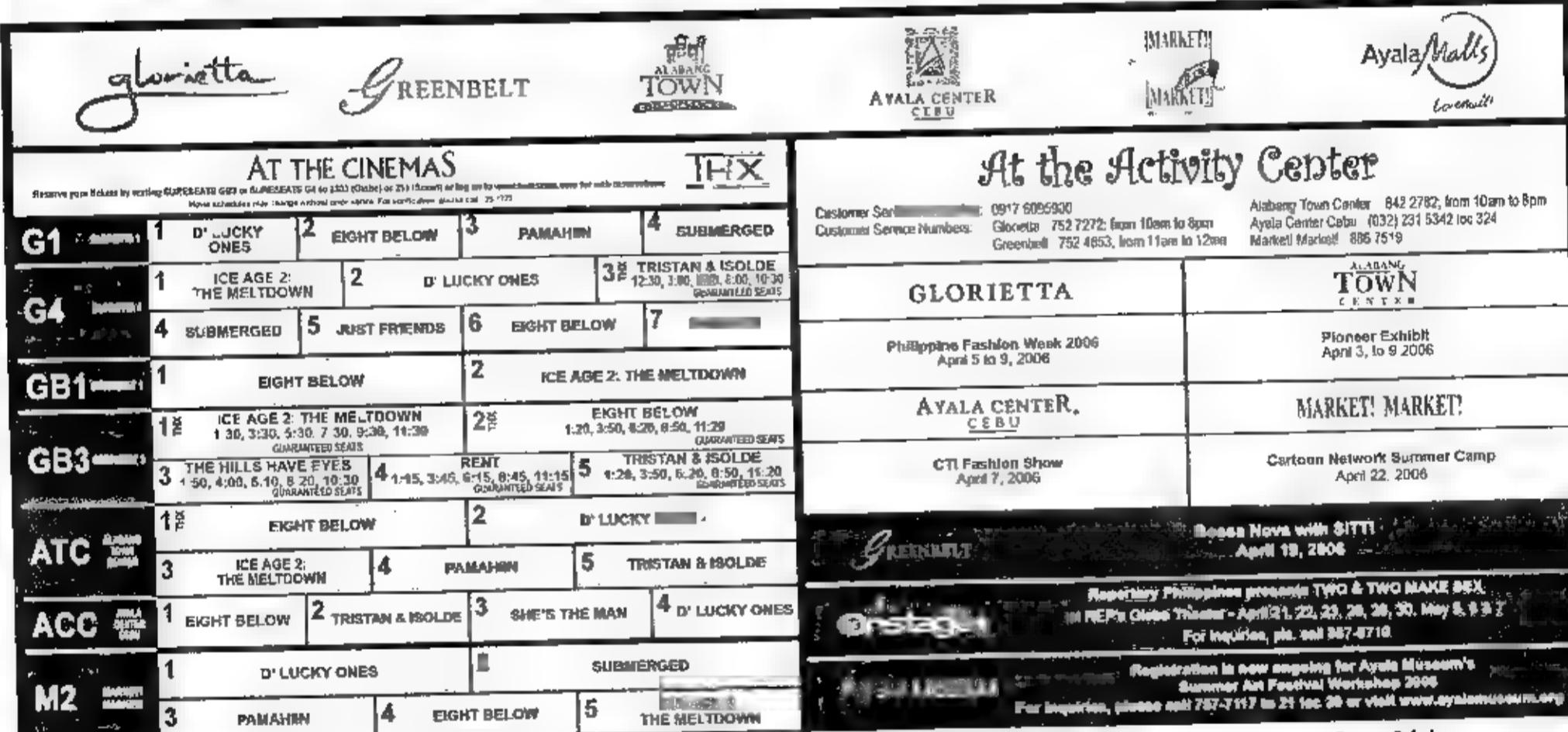


CATCH IT AT THE FOLLOWING CINEMAS:

ROBINSONS ERNATA - SUPERMERCADITO - ROBINSONS GALERIA - ROBINSONS PIONEER - ROB-
WALL - ROBINSONS METRE EAST - STA LUCHA - ROBINSON'S WARS - ROBINSON'S DAZZLING BEAT -
ROBINSONS PARADISE - GATEWAY - ALI MALL - REFORM - CHAMBER LA - EASTWOOD CINEMA -
PROMENADE - GREENHILLS - ROCKWELL - JAPAN'S WAGNET - LA CRESTA - YALI EXTRAVAGANZA -
SLOCUMA - 4 STAR - THEATRE 3 - ALIBANG BANG TOWN CENTER - FESTIVAL MALL - METROPOLIS -
ROBINSONS SAN FERNANDO - ROBINSONS ANGELES - JADE MALLS - ROBINSONS CITY - CHIPEPEO
MALL - FAMAL CEBU - CINEMA CEBU - ORENTA CEBU - GABRIEL SYM - ACACIA DAMBO - PLAZA
VICTORIA DAVAO - GABRIEL SANTO DAVAO - MC CITY - ROBINSONS SAN PABLO - CINEMA
SANTO LUCAS - TEATRANTON CALAMAN - LUMAS CALAMAN - GABRIEL SANTO PABLO - CINEMA

卷之三

APRIL 26



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

ENTERTAINMENT

A2-7

Blanca Gomez, 'balikbayan'

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rodel Rotoni
Additional photo courtesy of Blanca Gomez and Lilibeth Nalpil of Sampaguita Pictures

WHILE PACKING HER BAlikbayan boxes, she casually told her granddaughter that she'd be spending Christmas in the Philippines.

The kid looked quite upset, as if unwilling to part with her grandmother. She asked pointedly: "But how about our sleep-overs?"

For a moment there, their roles were reversed, the kid needing to ask permission from her apo. "She talks like an adult at times," the proud grandmother said.

Last holiday season, former Sampaguita star Blanca Gomez, now based in Los Angeles, visited Manila and her hometown in Rambon. "I met with all my relatives, my nieces and grandchildren in the province," she recounted. "We're 10 in the brood. My seven sisters are in the Philippines. One brother is also in the US, another has passed away."

In Manila, she stayed with older sister Daisy Romualdez, who was also a Sampaguita contract player.

The trip had proven to be so enjoyable, she extended her vacation to three months. (She flew back to LA in March, with plans to return soon.)

"Family is the only thing I miss," she said. She quit show biz in 1979, migrated to the US in 1984 and visited only briefly in 1991.

Overseas calls

Whenever homesickness caught up with her, she made overseas calls to her sisters: "Just to hear their voices."

She has remained close to her siblings—yes, even to the formidable Daisy, one perceived as "feisty and fiery" in show biz circles.

"That's just her image," Blanca insisted. "In real life, she's kind-hearted. It's just that she's a fighter and she won't back down from defending her loved ones. She has always been like that, even when we were children."

Daisy Romualdez's younger sister and former Star of '66, revisits home, family and friends



BLANCA, right, in "Sayonara, My Darling" with Rosemarie Sonora.



IN "Mga Batang Turista" with Ramil Rodriguez.

Family has indeed remained a constant in her ever-changing life.

America can be a harsh, lonely place for migrants, she pointed out. "The lifestyle is fast. Very hectic."

She's been in the rat race for two decades. (Upon her arrival in the US, she managed a restaurant for seven years before taking on the duties of a full-time mom.)

"I told my kids that I needed a break, a change of atmosphere," she said of her recent vacation.

In Manila, she played *balikbayan* to the hilt—partying with friends and reuniting with her Sampaguita family.

in the Greenhills parking lot, she accidentally bumped into Nene Vera-Perez, the Sampaguita matriarch. "I was so happy to see her! I was really planning to call her after our Rambon trip. Right there and then, we set a lunch date at the Vera-Perez home."

For her kids, she hopes to buy copies of *Star of '66*—especially those with fellow Stars of '66—Rosemarie Sonora, Gina Pareño, Shirley Moreno, Bert Leroy Jr. Ramil

and Pepito Rodriguez, and the late Loretta Marquez, Dindo Fernando and Edgar Salcedo.

Pepito was a fave partner and Gina was her bosom buddy in those care-free days.

Among her favorite movies were "Wish Upon a Star" ("my first drama picture") and "Sayonara, My Darling" ("we filmed in Japan").

She also loved the "Mga Batang" series—"Mga Batang Turista," "Mga Batang Lagim," "Mga Batang Iskwata."

She also found "Mga Anak sa Pagkakasala" memorable. "It was my first film and it was directed by Eddie Garcia," she recalled. "He was a pro. On our first shooting day in UP Diliman, he simply told me to relax. My partner was Eddie Gutierrez, Daisy's friend. To make me feel at ease, [Gutierrez] befriended and visited me at our house."

Her first talent fee? "I earned P500 per picture and was given a P50 allowance."

"A long story," she described her "discovery."

Jose Perez, Mrs. Nene's late husband and Sampaguita producer, initially spotted her in a church when she was 13.

At first, Blanca was reluctant to try the movies. "He waited for two years," she said. "When I turned 15, he asked

Substitute campus

After some hemming and hawing, she finally said yes.

"Doc Perez offered me a scholarship," she pointed out. "I attended night classes, from 5 to 9 p.m., at the Far Eastern University, where I finished high school."

Sampaguita proved to be a substitute campus for young Blanca.

"Doc Perez was a wonderful producer," she said.

He led by example. "If our call time was 8 a.m., he'd be there at 7:30 a.m. He made sure that we were well-trained and always impeccably dressed. Mrs. Perez personally picked our clothes, made by Ramon Valera and Pino Moreno. Doc Perez brought us to parties at the Manila Hotel. He treated us like his own kids."

The discipline instilled in Sampaguita served her well in America, where she raised her children Bridget, Cristina, Beverly and Ryan.

Bridget works as mediator for Mercury Insurance," she related. "Cristina is a student counselor/teacher at the University of Phoenix. Beverly is a registered nurse. Ryan works in a restaurant."

If her kids all turned out well, she believes it's because she stubbornly held on to Filipino traditions.

She admitted that she had made a career out of being a mom.

"When they were young, I drove my kids to school and fetched them after."

BLANCA/A2-4

ROUNDUP

Cancel it!

THE PHILIPPINE Alliance Against Pornography Inc. is urging the Roman Catholic Church, all other religious groups and the Filipino people "to immediately withdraw support" from ABS-CBN.

In a statement circulated to media organizations, PAAP spokesperson Aido Piromeno said ABS-CBN had "declared total war against children, the lowly and oppressed" by showing "no remorse" despite the massacre of more than 80 people and injuries to hundreds, during the fateful morning of "Wowowee's" first anniversary.

ABS-CBN should have cancelled "Wowowee" altogether, Piromeno insisted.

He added: "Various shows ... on the Lopez-owned [network] promote seduction, lust, pornography, marital infidelity, debauchery, graphic display of violence and criminal activities. Only evil spirits will enjoy watching these highly questionable programs."

Spacey in hot seat

LONDON—Hollywood star Kevin Spacey has pledged to keep running one of Britain's most famous theaters, despite a warning from critics and questions over why the Old Vic may stand empty for the next five months.

"My commitment has never been stronger," the Oscar-winning artistic director of the renowned London theatre company told Reuters.

With box office receipts sliding, The Old Vic's production of Arthur Miller's "Resurrection Blues" closed on Saturday a week earlier than planned.

The next play scheduled is a production in September of Eugene O'Neill's "A Moon for the Misbegotten," starring Spacey himself, who took over the historic theater in September 2004.

"People calling for my resigna-

tion because of the plays we put on is the height of arrogance," he said. "The critics don't own the theater."

Reuters

Lyrics for Britain

LONDON—The Irish band U2 has given Britain its favorite song lyric, according to a survey released Monday.

The line "One life, with each other, sisters, brothers" from the 1992 song "One" topped a poll con-

ducted by music channel VH1.

Runner-up was the downbeat "So you go and you stand on your own, and you leave on your own, and you go home, and you cry, and you want to die" from The Smiths' "How Soon Is Now?"

A line from Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" — "I feel stupid and contagious, here we are now, entertain us" — came in third. Bob Marley's "Re-

demption Song" and Coldplay's "Yellow" took fourth and fifth places.

More than 13,000 people par-

ticipated in the poll, choosing

from a list of 100 lyrics selected

by music industry figures. AP

Gibson's latest film delayed

LOS ANGELES—Movie fans will have to wait a bit longer to see Mel Gibson's next foray into action movies, the Mayan epic "Apocalypto."

The action adventure has been

bumped from Aug. 4 release to Dec. 8. A spokesperson for Disney, which is releasing "Apocalypto," said

the production had fallen behind

because of heavy rains in the

wilds of Mexico, where Gibson is shooting.

AP

No Catholic baptism

LOS ANGELES—Katie Holmes,

27, was raised a Catholic but

says fiance Tom Cruise, 43, their soon-to-arrive baby will not have a Catholic baptism.

Cruise told Diane Sawyer in an interview on ABC's "Primetime," that aired Friday night.

"You can be Catholic

and be a Scientologist.

You can be Jewish and

be a Scientologist. But

we're just Scientologists."

Holmes' switch to Scientology has sparked reports of a rift between her devout parents, Ohio natives Martin and Kathleen, and the actor, who introduced her to Scientology.

AP

Cartoon man

Soumitra "Sunny" Saha is senior vice president, regional advertising sales and marketing, for Turner Entertainment Networks Asia (Tena).

Based in Hong Kong, Sunny directly oversees television and interactive advertising sales and marketing activities for Cartoon Network's India, Australia, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Pakistan and South East Asia feeds, Pogo, Tena's kids channel in India and Boomerang in Australia and South East Asia.



SOUMITRA "Sunny" Saha

ENTERTAINMENT

4th biggest buyer of 'Asianovelas'



ETHEL Booba didn't scratch.

MAUI Taylor didn't speak.

Kiss and break up ... or battles in Bora

THEY MEANT TO "PATCH THINGS UP" But on-today-off-tomorrow couple Ethel Booba and Alex Crisano ended up duking it out at the Boracay police station. Ethel was reportedly jealous of a member of an all-female sexy group. He said. She scratched and hit him on the head. She said. He banged his own head against the wall.

Hmm, we can can believe her. That would explain the dents we saw on the walls of the condo unit they used to share.

Bora battle 1

Boracay wasn't big enough for another pair of bickering ex-lovers. Maui Taylor reportedly snubbed ex-boyfriend Brian Revilla when they crossed paths in a restaurant where the entire clan was celebrating his mom Lani Mercado's birthday. Even so, Maui sent "Tita" Lani an SMS birthday greeting.

Bora 'battle' 3

They were quarreling down, but former sweethearts Gwen Garcia and Andrew Wolff were spotted together on the island. Gwen explained to reporters, "He's trying to win me back." TV footage didn't make it look like she was playing hard to get. Tsk, tsk.

Bora battle 4

Also seen on Bora last week were Joey Marquez and Alicia Mayer, who recently split up. They prudently partied on opposite sides of the island, however.

Lighter, younger

Lorna Tolentino checked husband Rudy Fernandez out of the hospital on Monday. She refuted reports that Daboy is set to go abroad for an extensive checkup or, as the rumor mills put it, "a second opinion." She said they had to cancel a planned vacation this month. Now, she said, Daboy is recovering well. She told *Inquirer* sounding pleased, "He's 10 pounds lighter, and looks younger."

How about ... Pilita?

If she's willing to go through the requisite audition (see page A2-1), Asia's Queen of Song Pilita Corrales, we think, should be an excellent judge for "Philippine Idol." Now, is she?

Toni out

Toni Gonzaga is out of "Pinoy Big Brother" as main host and Mariel Rodriguez is taking her place (see story on this page). We wonder why?

Gong Li, believe it

Chinese actress Gong Li will star in "Believe It or Not," a new movie directed by Tim Burton, Hong Kong's Apple Daily newspaper reported. Gong starts filming in October with Jim Carrey, who will play Robert L. Ripley, the cartoonist who created the famous *Believe It or Not* series. The report said Gong beat Ziyi Zhang to get the role. AP

Does she mind?

But does Ziyi mind? The younger actress, who was recently named a Cannes juror, says it doesn't bother her to keep making Chinese movies, even if she has broken through Hollywood—as long as the scripts are high-quality. In fact, she is appearing in the upcoming court drama, "The Banquet," directed by Chinese director Feng Xiaogang. AP

His 'stupid fault'

In London, British pop star George Michael crashed into three cars while trying to park his SUV in London early Sunday, the Daily Mirror reported Monday. The 42-year-old former Wham! vocalist was arrested in February on suspicion of possessing drugs after being found slumped at the wheel of a car. He said in a statement at the time: "It is my own stupid fault, as usual." AFP

Tom Hanks' top 5

In Berlin, Tom Hanks picked his top five favorite films of all time. "I just can't see enough of 2001: A Space Odyssey (by Stanley Kubrick, 1968)" the actor told Germany's *Bild* newspaper in an interview published last week. Hanks also picked "Elephant" (2003) by Gus Van Sant, "The Godfather" (1972) by Francis Ford Coppola, "Fargo" (1996) by Joel and Ethan Coen, and "Boogie Nights" (1997) by Paul Thomas Anderson. Reuters

By Nini Valera

THE PHILIPPINES IS THE FOURTH biggest buyer of Asianovelas, according to Leng Raymundo, ABS-CBN vice president for program acquisition.

Raymundo, who is also the network's most-traveled executive, told *INQUIRER* Entertainment that Japan is the top buyer, China the next biggest buyer; followed by Taiwan.

Philippine-made telenovelas, like *Jericho Rosales'* "Pangako sa 'Yo," have also been exhibited in trade shows abroad, and Malaysia has, in fact, acquired the loca. soap.

Raymundo said the popularity of Asianovelas, which have become a staple for the prime-time programming of both ABS-CBN and GMA 7, could be attributed to the similarity in cultures of these biggest buyers.

"Asians apparently have the same sentiments and sensibilities," she observed.

"There's also that killing (thrill over romantic team-ups) factor in the shows that is also a common denominator in choosing what shows to buy."

The most popular Asianovelas these days are made in Korea, Raymundo added.

An Asianovela with a feisty heroine always scores high with top buyers, Raymundo said.

Other considerations, she said, are romance and comedy values of a show, plus action sequences.

So far, the all-time top rater among the Asianovelas is "Meteo Garden," which starred the popular Taiwanese boy group F4.

Raymundo stressed the cost-effectiveness of airing foreign acquired shows, saying that buying an Asianovela was less expensive than producing a local show in the magnitude of "Panday," even if the network has to dub the show in Filipino and create a loca. theme song for the show.

The network, she said, also spends a sizeable amount in promoting an Asianovela even if the stars are not here physically for media events.

"If their schedules allow it, we always invite the stars to come here," Raymundo said. In the Philippines, Raymundo bids against rival network GMA 7 for Asianovelas.

She missed out on "Jewel in the Palace," which is now a ratings ruler on GMA 7, but she did not regret this, she said. "We have different tastes. I rely mostly on my guts when I bid for a show. So far, my guts have not failed me."

Raymundo also predicted that Latin telenovelas like "Ruby" would be the next big thing in Philippine television, although these might meet with some objection for being bolder and more adult in content.

ABS-CBN's latest Korean import is "Princess Lulu."

RUSHES



TONI out



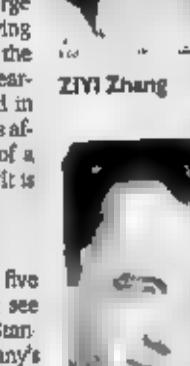
MARIEL in



PILITA Corrales



ZIYI Zhang



TOM Hanks

Bucky bids bye to 'AI' quest

By Kathryn Fatima Reyes

"AMERICAN IDOL" JUDGE PAULA ABDUL gives the 12th finalists little tokens every week that they manage to stay on.

This was revealed to *INQUIRER* Entertainment by Bucky Covington, the latest contestant to get booted from the show.

In an interview arranged by Star TV on Thursday (Friday in Manila), Bucky said the most memorable gift he got from the lady judge was a necklace with a little star on it that says, "Reach for the stars" and, on the back, "You just might become one."

The 28-year-old country singer from North Carolina disagreed with critics who say that as a judge, Paula should not be too "enthusiastic" during performances.

For a performer like him, Bucky said, to be able to make somebody dance while he is singing is a great confidence booster, especially if that somebody is a judge on the No. 1 reality TV talent search contest in the US.

Bucky, who got good reviews from all three judges—Abdul, Randy Jackson and Simon Cowell after singing Queen's "Fat Bottomed Girls" last Tuesday, said he was surprised to be eliminated. But he said it was good to leave on a week when his performance was solid.

"If I'm not going to win, eighth is just as good as fourth to me," Bucky said. "It seems a lot of people are like, 'I didn't think you should win it. But I'd rather have that than, 'How did you make it this far?'"

Can you tell us a little bit more about your wife?

She is wonderful. They say behind every good man is a good woman. Crystal, she stands in front of me. She's been more than supportive. I did a good job picking that one.

Both you and Taylor have had experience playing bars and nightclubs. Did that give you an edge?

Definitely. When you're used to playing Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday nights

in a smoky little bar room, a minute and a half every week is nothing.

Did any one week, as far as the themes went, throw you off and make you say, "Oh no, what am I going to pick?"

Yes, the main one that threw me actually was Stevie Wonder. But I came across "Suspicion" and I was like, "Hey kid, we can knock this out." So I ended up doing that.

Tell us a little bit about the Carolina triangle there with you, Kellie, and Chris. Did you talk much about your connection?

It's a nice, comforting feeling to know there are three of you out of North Carolina. But then again, where other people might have like a whole state voting for them, we have to split it up into threes. So I'm sure it probably hurts a little bit, but all is well.

So five out of the seven left are from the south. Every previous "American Idol" winner is from the south. Why does the south do so well in American Idol?

That's hard to say. I don't know if maybe the accents and the attitudes, or just maybe something that a lot of your big cities just aren't used to.

Rocky (Bucky's twin brother) looks a lot like you, how can people tell you apart?

I have more earrings. (Seriously) ... if you talk to me or him for five or ten minutes, you'll know.

Did he cause some confusion the week that he was in the audience?

The stage manager and security came up to him and said, "What are you doing out here? You're supposed to be back stage." He said, "Cue homely, you have the wrong one."

At one point in the show, someone gave you a piece of advice and said, "You need to

TITLE A2-4



LAUREN Dyogi

12 out of 30,000 picked for 'PBB' teen edition

By Nini Valera

AS CHALLENGING as picking the winner in any "Pinoy Big Brother" edition is choosing the housemates.

PBB director and business unit head Lauren Dyogi said he has met about 30,000 wannabe housemates from all over the country during auditions held in Cebu, Davao and Manila for the reality show's forthcoming teen edition.

"About 30,000 teens eyeballed me during these auditions," he said, laughing.

Throughout the eyeballing, Dyogi, who was once a ramp model, had maintained a straight face even if some of the hopefuls tried very hard to make him smile or catch his attention by tumbling down the aisle. This was what happened during the last audition held at Dish inside the ABS-CBN compound last month during which, Dyogi admitted, he had to make a lot of tough calls.

"I wish I could pick more," he said. "There is so much talent out there. But the playing field had to be narrowed down [to 12]."

Among the chosen ones, Dyogi hopes to

TITLE A2-4

Story of heroism that needs to be told

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

Coincidentally, just about when the film's trailer started to be screened in theaters, the flight's voice recording was heard by the public, when it was used as evidence in the ongoing trial of the terrorists involved in the 9-11 events.

This has served to make the story of United Airlines Flight 93 even more freshly significant to viewers, as the film should get good viewership when it opens next month.

What about a film on the other 9-11 events, specifically the airborne attack on the twin towers of the World Trade Center? We hear that Oliver Stone is completing work on such a production, and that it'll start its run later this year.

If the reaction to "United 93" is strong, Stone's 9-11 movie should attract huge viewership. But, it could prove to be even more controversial than "United 93." If Stone opts to tell its story like it was, replete with heroism and the airborne attack's horrific consequences.

Is it too soon for all that to be vividly recalled on the big screen? When would be the right time to provide cinematic closure to those heroic tragic and even apocalyptic events?

Movies on TV

ON HBO today, 6:30 a.m., "Big Fish"; 10:45 a.m., "Mermaids"; 9 p.m., "Mambo Kings." Tomorrow

at 12:15 p.m., "Beyond Borders"; 4:30 p.m., "Catch-22"; 8 p.m., "Rome: Pharsalus"; 9 p.m., "Rome: Caeserion"; 9:50 p.m., "Rome: Ubi"; April 21 at 8 a.m., "Surviving Picasso"; 4 p.m., "Moscow on the Hudson."

On Cinemax today at 6 a.m., "Phantom of the Rue Morgue"; 12 noon, "Dragon: The Bruce Lee Story." Tomorrow at 4:45 p.m., "House of Wax"; April 21 at 2:30 p.m., "Beetlejuice"; 4 p.m., "Mystic River"; 6:30 p.m., "The Adventures of Brisco County Jr." 2:40 a.m., "The Appaloosa."

'Easy English'

CORBAN Learning Center offers Easy English courses every Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday. The 30-hour course includes grammar, conversation, pronunciation and writing. Call 8266655 or 0917-5297718.

Film, TV workshops

THE TAGAYTAY Film, Broadcast and Creative workshops will be held this year from May 8 to 13 and May 22 to 27 at the DAP Conference Center and Hotel. They include Compelling Video Production for Institutional Presentations (Castro/Thierry Gomez), Effective Scriptwriting for AVP's (Nick Tayag), How to Make Your Advocacy Radio Program Entertaining (Tato Malay), Photography Is Beyond Digital (Joey Tanedo), TV Hosting (Chi-Chi Robles), Cool Design for Community/Company Paper (Lynne Villariba), Taking the Boredom Out of Corporate Presentations (Dol Rosales), Communicator Planning and Crisis PR (Ray Junia), How to Direct for Film (Joel Lemanian and others), and Writing for Film (Roy Iglesias). Call 8929421 or 4133840.

New species seen revitalizing shrimp industry

By Ronald W. Domingo

INTRODUCING WRIST BP MONITOR



"TRAVEL MATE" WRIST BP

- Handy and Portable
- 100% Accurate
- Ideal for travel
- 2 pcs. "AAA" Batteries

FAR EAST MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

STER. BILLS, PHARMA	SH. BILLS
2nd Ave. 426-636-1513	SH. BILLS
SH. BILLS A	SH. BILLS
Sh. Bills B	SH. BILLS
Sh. Bills C	SH. BILLS

AN UMBRELLA GROUP OF EXPORTERS YESTERDAY said shrimp producers were looking at a recovery of the local industry with a promising new species of disease-resistant shrimp.

At the same time, the Philippine Exporters Confederation said seaweed farmers were losing ground in the international market due to the appreciation of the peso against the dollar.

Philexport officials said the Philippine Shrimp Industry Association or Philshrimp was bent on regaining markets they lost in the aftermath of prawn pestilence in the 1990s.

Shrimp firms are adopting the latest in prawn farm technology as well as best practices in hatching and feeding stocks.

They are also commercializing other species aside from the tiger prawn, the group said.

Philshrimp, with the help of the Bureau of

Fisheries and Aquatic Resources, has taken up research and development efforts to discover exotic shrimp varieties that may be produced commercially and are less prone to diseases than the erstwhile favorite—the tiger prawn.

Results of the projects in BFAR's pilot farms would be the highlight of the 5th National Shrimp Industry Congress slated in mid-2006.

But Philexport said that results have been encouraging this early, such that the white prawn project is expected to hasten the revitalization of the industry.

On the other hand, Philexport members in Region 9 called for a similar move for the seaweed industry, which is losing ground as an international leader in the production of carageenan and related products.

Alfredo Sarte, president of Philexport Region 9, said the stronger local currency has pulled down the price of dried seaweed to a range of P14-P16 a kilo, which makes cultivation unprofitable.

Sarte said the drop in prices from a range of P18 to P20 a kilo last year has discouraged thousands of farmers from raising seaweed.

Shares close lower

From page B1

ing oil prices, dealers said.

However, continued gains in mining stocks trimmed the market's losses as metal prices rose to fresh multi-year highs overnight.

The composite index ended down 3.64 points at 2,225.72 after trading between 2,222.02 and 2,235.91. The broader all-shares index retreated 3.71 points to 1,365.74.

Losers led gainers 71 to 34, with 52 stocks unchanged.

Volume was 11.24 billion shares worth P2.2 billion.

The geopolitical situation in Iran is pushing up oil and other commodity prices and it is creating inflationary concerns.

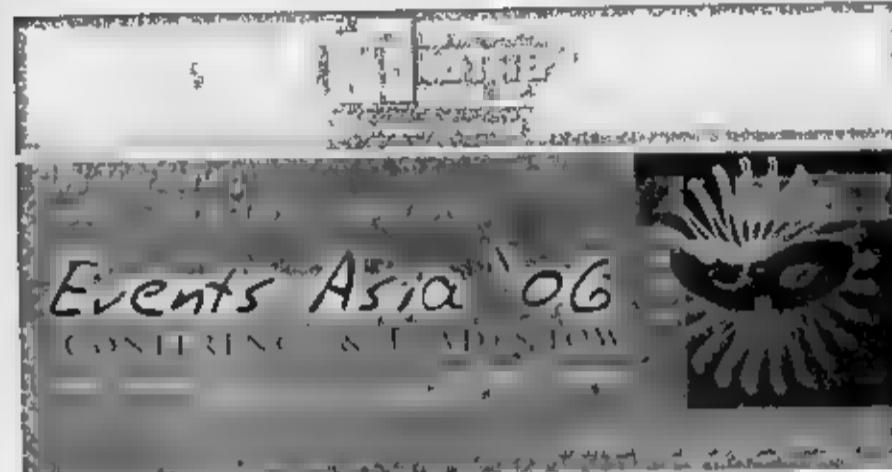
That may put pressure on the central bank to eventually raise interest rates, said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

Dealers said the market might continue to head lower in coming sessions with upcoming first-quarter

corporate results unlikely to help.

"Earnings in the first quarter are likely to be less robust than usual because of the higher taxes companies have to pay," Vistan said, referring to a law that raised value-added taxes and corporate income taxes in February.

Top-traded PLDT closed down P15 to P1,965 while rival Globe Telecom retreated P5 to P885. APP



EVENTS ASIA - LIVE MARKETING brings together marketing and event professionals in a one day dynamic meeting of minds. Organized by a group of event advocates, this live-wire breakthrough aims to bring color and pizzazz to the practice of events and live marketing in the Philippines as well as in Asia.

Events Marketing & Management in the Philippines has evolved to become an effective strategy to promote a product, a service, and a cause. From simple meetings to well attended conferences, from simple product samplings to extravagant launches - LIVE MARKETING breathes life into your BRAND in the most sensual and emotional experiences imaginable.

LIVE MARKETING: IDEAS, STRATEGIES, EXPERIENCE. Find out how it can boost your sales and marketing targets and how it can leverage YOUR BRAND.

Sign up now for EVENTS ASIA CONFERENCE. Feel and experience LIVE MARKETING like never before. Hurry! Good seats limited only. Pre-registration required.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

1. Events Evolution: Face-to-Face Marketing in the 20th Century (Changes in the Marketing Mix)

Speaker: Mr. Tony C. Bengzon*

President, Philippine Marketing Association

II. The Brand: Focal Point of Experience

Speaker: To be announced

III. Live Marketing: Creative Ways of Mounting Spectacular Events

Speaker: Mr. Mervi Graham-Sherriffman

President, Vigilante Inc., ABAP Member

IV. Trends in Event Selection: The Critical Decision

Speaker: Mr. Peter Miller*

Managing Director, 141 Worldwide Pte Ltd

V. Sponsorship: ROI or ROI: Maximizing Participation and Investment

Speaker: To be announced

VI. Successes and Failures: Learning from Experience. An Outlook of the Events Industry

Speaker: Mr. Luisito R. Garcia, Jr. D.B.A.

CPM Asia Pacific, Davao, SPACE

Course of St. Geroge, Davao

VII. Round Table Discussion (Peer-to-Peer)

10 TOPICS

Topics for the Round Table Discussion:

Proprietary / In-House Events, BUZZ: Events to PPI

Planning and Budgeting: Working with Suppliers and Event Management Firm. The value of Trade Shows and Exhibit Events: Promotions and Attendance: Career in Event Management: Choosing the Right Venue: Site Selection: Exhibit Design: Standing Out from the Crowd: Corporate Events Manager Concept: Getting the Approval of Management

* For Confirmation

EXHIBITORS PROFILE:

Manufacturers and Suppliers of products and services related to exhibit and event marketing and management.

Advertising Premiums / Corporate Gifts

Associations / Service Organizations

Audio-Visual Equipment

Banners / Merchandising Collaterals

Computer Equipment, Technology and Software

Design Firms

Event Management / Marketing

Events Security

Exhibit Construction (Modular or Fabrication)

Exhibit Designer & Producers

Exhibit Programs and Management

Graphics and Signage

Kiosks-Interactive

Mobile Display / Outdoor

Mobile Marketing

Photography

Printing Services

Recruiters / Models / Agency

Trade Show Marketing & Software

Venues (Hotels, Tents, etc.)

International Exhibit Producers & Services

Multimedia / AVP / Post-Production Facilities

Stage / Lights & Sounds

REGISTER NOW!!!

Applicable Rates:
Registration: March 28 - April 8 P 8,000 + VAT
April 10 - April 26 P 8,500 + VAT
May 1 - June 8 P 7,500 + VAT
P 6,000 + VAT
P 5,500

Group Rate: June 8, min. of 1000

PMIA & ASAP Members: (less 10%)

International Delegates: US \$ 220 (Hotel & Airfare not included)

*Inclusive of 1 Lunch and 2 Snacks.

All checks payable to: The Nextstep Events Planner, Inc.

Produced and Organized by:

10/F Unit 1207 Cityland Homes, 10/F Alabang Corp., Valero Street, Salcedo Village, Makati City, Philippines 1227
Tel. No.: (632) 843-8574 - Website: www.eventsasiaforum.com

Telefax: (632) 955-0996 Email: info@eventsasiaforum.com

Mrs. Tina Florida +6398 26052178; Mr. Alex Ongpauco +63927 4729938

www.eventsasiaforum.com

**EXHIBITORS!
RESERVE NOW
AND GET
40% Discount
(Until April 28, 2006)**

Sponsored by:
CIE
Advertisement
Services
Associates
for the Philippines

Expo

To Launch Townhouse Project in *Manila*

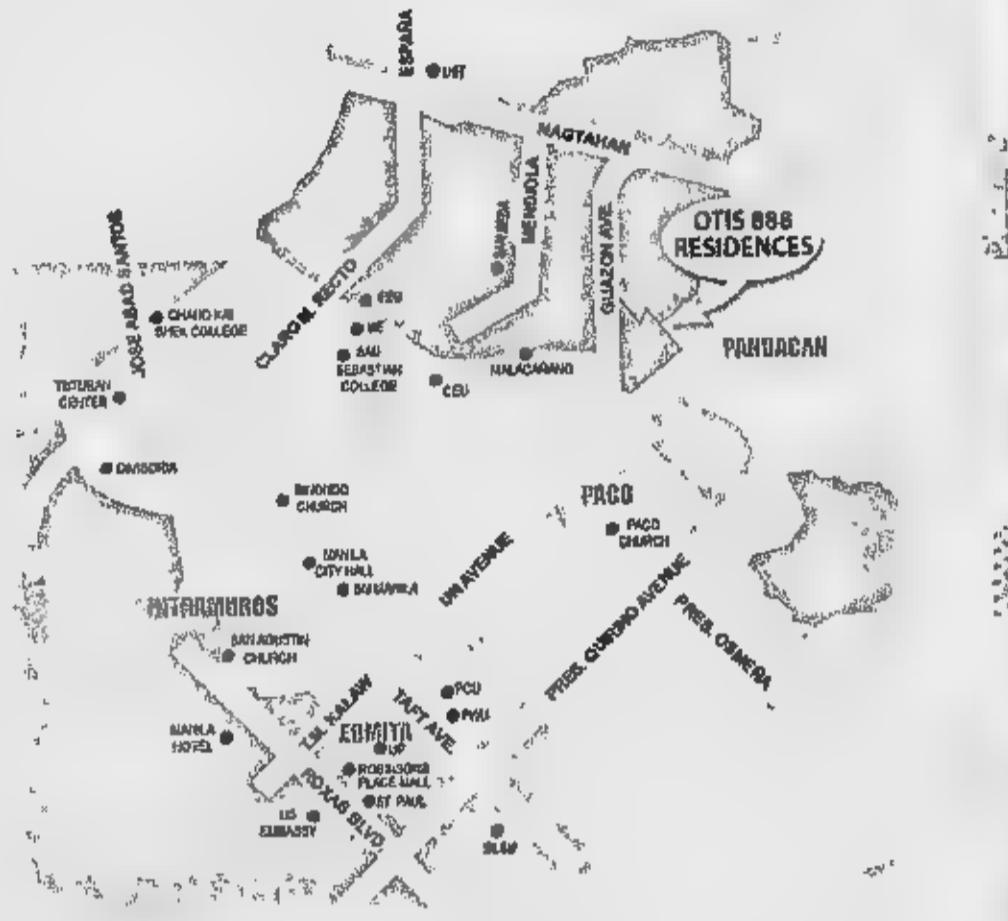
Robinsons Land Corp. (RLC), is planning to launch this April an upscale townhouse residential development, **Otis 888 Residences**, at its recently acquired 4-hectare property located along Otis Road, Manila.

Otis 888 Residences will be a 215-unit upscale development which will primarily cater to the Filipino-Chinese living in the Binondo Chinatown area. It will consist of a mix of 3-BR and 4-BR units, to suit the discerning tastes and need for wider space and greeneries of its target clientele. Units range from P6.5 million and up, with floor areas of 138, 168 and 188 square meters.

Its strategic location of being 2 kilometers or less than 10 minutes away from the Binondo area offers a refreshing alternative for upscale living for Fil-Chinese. Adding comfort is its close proximity to nearby schools like St. Peters, St. Jude, Chiang Kai Shek, Uno, De La Salle-Taft, Malayan High School of Science, St. Stephen, UST and San Beda.

Considered as one of the few remaining premium properties this side of Manila, the site of Otis 888 Residences offers a promising new lifestyle for a privileged few. The gated community will welcome residents to sprawling amenities area with swimming pool, jogging paths, a function room and fitness area. All units will have an interior pocket garden and most corner units will have a separate strip garden to maximize breathing space.

RLC-High-Rise Buildings Division GM, Danilo E. Ignacio said, "Otis 888 Residences aims to address the growing needs of those expanding families in Binondo who require bigger living space."



He added, "A hectare of the property has been allocated for the development of a lifestyle mall which is planned to house a supermarket as well as a mix of retail, dining and service outlets. The mall and the nearby hospitals, schools and other commercial establishments will afford residents easy and safer access to basic needs."

Recently, RLC also bought the 9.3-hectare Jardine Davies property in Merville which the property giant envisions to be a mixed used development composed of several residential thematic enclaves. The property is located between Bicutan and Nichols Interchange.

Robinsons Land Corporation is the real-estate arm of JG Summit Holdings, Inc., (JGSHI), one of the country's largest conglomerates with diverse interest in branded consumers foods, agro-industrial and commodity food products, textile, telecommunications, petrochemicals, air transportation and financial services.



BSP to extend aid to battered exporters

By Doris C. Duran

THE BANCO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS is prepared to extend aid to exporters now reeling from the peso's recent gains, urging them to protect themselves from currency fluctuations by using hedging mechanisms.

In a forum with exporters yesterday, BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr said the monetary institution is prepared to put up a fresh fund to help exporters better compete in the offshore markets by upgrading the quality of their products.

The industry has proposed an assistance fund worth P500 million.

"We're open to considering the establishment of an export promotion fund, but we have to come up with a program," Tetangco said. "We're now talking with the DTI (Department of Trade and Industry)."

According to the BSP chief, factors that are beyond the control of monetary authorities, have been dragging down the greenback, and jacking up regional currencies.

During the forum with the Monetary Board, representatives from small and

medium exporters warned that unless the peso falls back to the P53.81 level, many of the traders would be forced to fold up their businesses and lay off many workers in the provinces.

Tetangco told the exporters that they would have to "try and learn how to hedge."

Hedging refers to the use of various financial tools such as currency derivatives—whose values are based on the values of underlying goods or indices—to soften the impact of exchange rate volatility.

The BSP has a P10-million financial

support fund for the promotion of export products abroad. Tetangco said the institution would also consider another fund to further assist the sector.

The BSP chief added the banking regulator was also promoting small and medium enterprises through microfinance lending.

The BSP expects a softer growth of 8 percent in export earnings for this year, as against earlier expectations of 10 percent.

Likewise, imports are seen to post a slower growth of 9 percent versus the earlier forecast of 11 percent.

21-24 June 2006 • PICC Forum, Manila • 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

CALL FOR EXHIBITORS!

8th International Food • Beverage Manufacturing • Technologies Exposition 2006 (F&B ManuTech)

The one true trade exhibition for the food and beverage manufacturing and technologies industry

MEDIA PARTNERS

INQUIRER POST

ORGANIZED BY

TIME FOUNDATION, INC.
Philippine Institute of the Banks Association and Securities Inc.
Institute of the Philippines Society of Professional Engineers

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATIONS, CONTACT CUT UNLIMITED, INC.
Unit 2007 2G1, Prestige Tower, F Ortigas Ave. (formerly Emerald Ave.), Ortigas City, Pasig City
Tel +63.2.6870654, 6872955, 6872213, 6873292 Fax +63.2.6870604 Email cut@pacific.net.ph

www.foodandbeverageexposition-mantech.com

The
DIVINA & UY
LAW FIRM
is pleased to announce the
inauguration of its new law office
at the 8/F Pacific Star Building,
Makati Avenue, Makati City

SENIOR PARTNERS

Nilo T. Divina & Edwin C. Uy

JUNIOR PARTNERS

ALVIN S. DYSANGCO
ALDEN FRANCIS C. GONZALES
DANILO N. TUNGOL

ASSOCIATES

ALLAN CHRISTOPHER S. AGATI
DARWIN R. BAWAR
ARTHUR B. CAPILI
JOWEL T. CLOMA

OF COUNSEL

(Ret.) Justice WENCESLAO I. AGNIR, JR.
(Ret.) Justice OSWALDO D. AGCAOILI
Rep. AURELIO M. UMALI

Areas of Practice:

* Banking & Finance * Mergers and Acquisitions * Formation of Business Entities * Loan and Security Documentation * Corporate Rehabilitation, Litigation, Adversarial or Dispute Resolution * * Labor Relations * Taxation * Arbitration, Mediation, Collective Bargaining Negotiations * * Immigration * Maritime * Insurance * Intellectual Property * Mining * Telecommunications * * Election and Administrative Law *

Tel. 840-4303, 817-7846, 848-6804 info@divinaanduylaw.com Telefax No. 6700-8482

Atlas acquires \$5-M loan from affiliate to fund nickel project

By Christine A. Gaylican

MINING COMPANY ATLAS CONSOLIDATED Mining & Development Corp. has secured a three-year, \$5-million loan from Tuedo Mining Corp. to partly fund a nickel project in Palawan.

Tuedo Mining, a nickel mining company listed on the London Stock Exchange and an affiliate of Atlas, operates the Berong nickel project, a 10,659-hectare mining claim in Palawan.

The nickel mine has an indicated resource of 275 million metric tons at 1.3 percent nickel, and 0.074 percent cobalt at 0.9 percent nickel cutoff, that makes it one of the largest unexploited nickel laterite deposits in the world, Atlas said.

Development of the mine is reported to be nearly complete. A trial shipment from the mining project is scheduled for the middle of this year.

The loan carries a 10-percent annual interest rate and it is convertible to shares in Atlas at a par value of P10. The loan is also secured by Atlas's share in the earnings of the Berong nickel project.

Atlas owns around 35 percent of the Berong project.

Atlas is also undertaking the development of another project in Cebu. Company officials said that initial repair work at the mining site of another affiliate, Carmen Copper Corp., was ahead of schedule. The work was completed in October 2005.

Atlas earlier said it was planning to offer shares of Carmen Copper to the public before the year ends.

The company hopes that, with the initial public offering, it will be able to raise about half of the \$150 million Atlas needs to rehabilitate copper mines in Cebu.

The Cebu operations had been suspended in 1994.

MAKE YOUR \$ GROW

STATES OF AMERICA

	30 DAYS	60 DAYS	180 DAYS
\$ 1,000 UP	3.1250%	3.2500%	3.2500%
\$ 10,000 UP	3.2500%	3.3750%	3.5625%
\$ 50,000 UP	3.3750%	3.5000%	3.6250%
\$ 100,000 UP	3.5000%	3.6250%	3.7500%

Bank of Commerce

Call at 612-6600 locals 2280 / 2281 / 2282 / 2466

Tell Branches—Government—Local Landmarks—Your Local Address—Branches—2221 / 2222 / 2223 or 611-6600 for complete information.

Member: PDC & Magpas. Deposits Insured up to P500,000 per depositor.



Republic of the Philippines
Supreme Court
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Supreme Court through the Committee on Bids invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for

NAME OF PROJECT:

Office Supplies for lower courts (MCJ & Provinces)

Name of Project	Approved Budget	Source of Funding
LOT 1 OFFICE SUPPLIES FOR LOWER COURTS (MCJ)	P 8,855,558.02	Current Appropriations for the lower courts (CY-2005)
LOT 2 OFFICE SUPPLIES FOR LOWER COURTS (PROVINCES)	P 37,041,178.43	Current Appropriations for the lower courts (CY 2006)

PERIOD OF DELIVERY:

MCJ
PROVINCES
Twenty (25) calendar days after issuance of Purchase Order (P.O.)
Sixty (60) calendar days after issuance of Purchase Order (P.O.)

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES:

FOR LOT 1 AND 2:

I. PRE-BID CONFERENCE

The pre-bid conference will be held on:
Date: 03 May 2006, Wednesday
Venue: Conference Room (Ground Floor) Centennial Building, Supreme Court,
Padre Faura St., Malate, Manila
Time: 1:00 p.m. (for Lot 1)
2:00 p.m. (for Lot 2)

II. SUBMISSION OF ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND OPENING OF BIDS

The eligibility requirements of prospective bidders must be personally submitted by the duly authorized representatives, and the bids will be opened, thereafter, in the presence of the bidder's or their authorized representatives, to be held on:

Date: 17 May 2006, Wednesday
Venue: Training Room Center (Ground Floor) Centennial Building, Supreme Court,
Padre Faura St., Malate, Manila
Time: 1:00 p.m. (for Lot 1)
2:00 p.m. (for Lot 2)

Prospective bidders must relate to the head of the procuring entity or any member of the Committee on Bids or its Secretariat either by consanguinity or affinity up to the third degree.

Interested bidders may secure eligibility requirements and bid documents from The Committee on Bids, Property Division, 3rd Floor Annex Building, Supreme Court, after payment of a non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000.00) each for LOT 1 and LOT 2, prior to the conduct of pre-bid conference. For additional information, the bidders may contact the Secretary, Ms. Maria C. Jesus at tel. no. 626-6418.

The Committee on Bids reserves the right to: 1) reject any or all bids, 2) waive any defects or irregularities therein, 3) accept any bids or offers which it may consider to be most advantageous and beneficial to the government.

(PDC-April 19 & 20 2006)

(Sgt. JOSE P. PEREZ)

(Almost) No room at the inn

IF MAKATI SHANGRI-LA GENERAL manager Jarleth Lynch seems to have an extra spring in his steps these days, it is because his hotel has been enjoying occupancy rates similar to and even eclipsing Hong Kong industry standards.

Despite the coup scare and the Makati rallies, the average occupancy rates in Shangri-La and five other deluxe hotels in the country's premiere city went past 90 percent in February.

Shangri-La easily led the group, with 94 percent of its 699 rooms and suites all but sold out for that month.

Hong Kong hotels registered an average of 86-percent occupancy rate for the same month, although this represented the industry average across all-hotel categories.

Still, the Makati Shangri-La's 94 percent was clearly way ahead of the 91 percent for the popular Yau Ma Tei/Mongkok's districts, which host Hong Kong's industry-leading hotels.

The higher occupancy rate was achieved despite a 7-percent average increase for Shangri-La corporate clients starting this year, and all the more remarkable considering that the hotel's occupancy rate for the first quarter last year was only 83.5 percent.

Mirroring the Shangri-La's fortune, the Renaissance Makati, controlled by Hong Kong real estate tycoon Cheng Yu-tung, posted a 91.65 percent occupancy rate for February despite a 4-percent increase in room charges imposed beginning 2006, said Renaissance spokesperson Monique Trinidad-Toda.

Opened in 1994 before the Asian currency crisis drained tourism traffic, the Renaissance even registered "historic high" earnings last year, said Trinidad-Toda, declining to elaborate.

Yap got it flippin'
FELIPE YAP, the Lepanto Consolidated chair, was in an ebullient mood during Monday's share-

COCKTAILS

Victor C.
Agustin



BUSINESS

Japan aid eyed for Clark airport study

By Daxim L. Lucas

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL AGAIN rely on the generosity of the government of Japan for the development of the country's next generation international airport despite the transportation department's present troubles with a major Japanese contractor.

Speaking to reporters recently, a ranking official of the Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTr) said the government has formally asked the state-run Japan International Cooperation Agency (Jica) to fund a feasibility study on a proposed replacement for the Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Nai).

Specifically, Transportation Assistant Secretary Robert R. Castañares said an in-depth evaluation was needed to determine once and for all the viability of proposals to make the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport the country's air transportation hub by 2015.

"These feasibility studies are expensive so we've asked Jica if they can study a grant," he said.

Castañares said that a feasibility as comprehensive as the one envisioned by transportation authorities would cost anywhere from P100 million to P150 million, and would put a strain on the DOTr's relatively limited funds already earmarked for other projects.

The official said he was optimistic on getting a favorable response from the Japanese agency, which is responsible for doing out

overseas development assistance funding.

"They already informed us that they'll consider it," he said.

Castañares said the planned transfer of major airline and air cargo operations to the former US air base in Pampanga was necessary because of the congestion in Nai.

"Besides, Nai can't accommodate newer aircraft like the [Airbus] A380," he said.

MS PAYROLL

It ensures FAST, COMPLETE and ACCURATE computation of payroll & generation of government reportorial requirements.

OTHER PRODUCTS:

MSI PIS (Personnel Information System), MSI DTR (Daily Time Recording)

PROFIT Retail System (POS/Sales Manager, Inv., A.R. & P.O.)

For inquiries on Profit Retail System call: 734-5888 - 736-4753

METROSOFT, INC.

Attn.: MS Payroll Users:

Incorporation of BIR RR 1-2005.
Exemption of Minimum Wage Earners /
Individuals with compensation Income of
Pph 60,000 (sixty thousand a year)
from Withholding Tax is now available.

WEBSITE
w/ in M.M.

1031 Cityland 9, Dela Rosa Condo, Dela Rosa St., Makati City
Tel.: 802-2788 / 804-1222 / 802-4530 / 802-2808
804-1043 Fax No.: 802-2785 E-mail: mssoft@mssoft.com

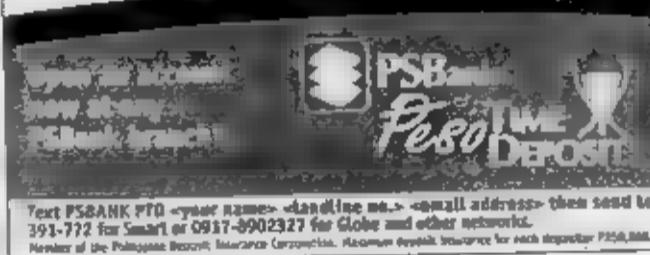
Get more
value for
your

Place
your money
in Time
Deposit

Deposit Amount	Interest Rates %
In Pesos	30 days to 3 years
50,000 - 99,999	3.50
100,000 - 499,999	4.50
500,000 - 999,999	5.25
1.0MM - 4.99MM	5.75
5.0MM - 9.99MM	5.75
10.0MM and up	6.00

1-2 or 3-year term placement offers monthly credit of interest.

** Rates are per annum basis and net of documentary stamp taxes.



Text PSBANK PTD <your Name> <deadline no. > <mail address> then send to
391-772 for Smart or 0917-8902327 for Globe and other networks.
Member of the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corporation. Maximum deposit insurance for each depositor P250,000.

Upgrade Your Future

Get Certified

Become a Certified Management Accountant

Join the 7th CMA Program of Australia

The CMA Program is a globally recognized program of the Institute of Certified Management Accountants in Australia.

CMA
Certified Management Accountants

The program develops skills of analysis and evaluation in the area of strategic cost and management practices while learning the organizational skills essential for today's successful management professionals.

May 06 - July 22, 2006

Holiday Inn Galleria Manila

Tel. No.: 687-9856 / 634-6475-77

E-mail: info@cmaphilippines.com

Visit: www.cmaphilippines.com



FOR ONCE, MANAGEMENT THAT MAKES THINGS SIMPLE.

The IBM eServer™ xSeries™ 226 Express lets you manage your current servers from a single console. That's simple. And together with Intel® Xeon® Processors, the x226 can help meet your business needs now and as you grow. That's smart. It can even alert you to potential hard drive problems up to 48 hours in advance. That's innovation that matters. All in all, it takes on a lot of responsibility.

IBM eServer xSeries 226 Express

Great for file, print, remote office, and collaboration.

From PhP136,500* (B6404A4)

Intel® Xeon® Processor 3.0GHz with 2MB L2 Cache
2MB L2 Cache (Dual available)
1x 512MB ECC DDR2 SDRAM DIMM, expandable to 16GB
1x 73GB 10K Hot Swap SCSI Hard Disk Drive
Integrated IBM ServerRAID 7e (supports RAID 0/1)
3-year On-site Warranty Service by IBM

IBM eServer xSeries x226
Intel® Xeon® Processor 3.0GHz with 2MB L2 Cache

From PhP147,000* (B6405A4)

Double the Power. Buy any of the above bundles and get
+ 512MB RAM
+ 73.4GB HD

IBM eServer xSeries x206m
From PhP55,400* (B6402A4)

Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 3.0GHz with 2MB L2 Cache
2x 512MB PC2-4200 DDR2 SDRAM
1x 160GB Simple Swap SATA Hard Disk Drive
Hard Disk Drive
Integrated IBM ServerRAID 8e
(supports RAID 0/1)

From PhP75,800* (B6402A4)



IBM



IBM eServer xSeries 100

From PhP68,900* (B6402A4)

Intel® Pentium® 4 Processor 3.0GHz with 2MB L2 Cache
1x 64MB PC2-4200 DDR2 SDRAM
2x 160GB Simple Swap SATA Hard Disk Drive
1-year On-site Warranty Service by IBM

MANUFACTURING MADE SIMPLE!

Introducing MISys Small Business Manufacturing

You asked for it: manufacturing software that is more powerful, yet simple to use; with more deployment options, and with flexibility to insure a lasting fit in a growing company. And all at a price you can afford today.

Low Total Cost of Ownership

MISys is the most affordable manufacturing software in the market not only because of its low purchase price but also because of the fact that it's designed to eliminate unexpected expenses you may have in owning the software. No surprises, no obsolescence, no gambles.

Room to Grow

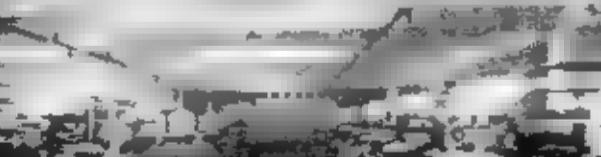
Start with the basic inventory control module. As you grow your manufacturing business, add advanced purchasing, bin tracking, production control, master production scheduling, shop floor control, among others.

Quick and Easy to Learn

MISys SBM utilizes the familiar Microsoft Office feel of popular email- or word-processing programs—so it's quick and easy to get access to useful information wherever you are and whenever you need it.

Run Stand-Alone or Fully Integrated

Use it on its own or integrate it with our own line of accounting software to create a complete manufacturing business management system. It is fully compatible and fully capable to handle important business processes.



Simple enough? MUSTARD Seed

A SMART TIP FROM YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP FOR SMALL/MEDIUM BUSINESS

432-525-1000 432-525-0000

www.misys.com.ph

www.mustardseed.com.ph

From death ward to a true healing facility

By Tina Arceo-Dumao

UP UNTIL ABOUT THREE years ago, many of the children who were taken to the pediatric intensive care unit of the Ospital ng Maynila did not leave the

room alive.

The sick children's already slim chances of survival became even slimmer due to the high incidence of infection brought on by severe lack of facilities.

The paint on the beds

was peeling, the floors were a patchwork of tiles, and the ceilings bore the ugly marks of water leaks.

Nothing to work with

Residents and nurses on duty even had to crudely fix-

ation neonatal respirators out of cut-up water gallons to fit the babies' heads. They had nothing else to work with.

But visit the ICU today and it presents a vastly different picture.

The beds are now made

of stainless steel, the floors are rubberized, the windows have curtains, and the walls are painted with pictures to help along sick children on their road to recovery.

Also, cases of infection that have long plagued the ICU patients are now down to a minimum.

Nobody could be more proud of the pediatric ICU improvement than the employees of financial consulting firm Punongbayan and Araullo, who financed the improvement by contributing their hard-earned money to P&A for a Cause (PAUSE).

The pediatric ICU has been renamed Punongbayan and Araullo ward, in honor of Jose G. Araullo, chair emeritus of P&A.

The ward is just one of the many projects that the employees voluntarily support through PAUSE.

PAUSE projects coordinator Joseph Peter Anthony S. Ayson said P&A for a Cause was formed in November 2002 out of the desire of the employees to be involved in community work, and not be confined to their work in the auditing, accounting and financial consulting profession.

"It is purely voluntary, employees just thought of doing something to give back," Ayson says.

Feeding program

In February 2003, PAUSE had its first project, dubbed P&AKAIN, a community feeding program conceptualized by the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Under the program, 30 malnourished children from one of the most underprivileged communities in General Trias, Cavite were given hot meals every day for six months to bring up their weight to normal levels.

Encouraged by the success of the first project, PAUSE partnered with more groups and government agencies to reach out to more beneficiaries.

Last year, PAUSE started work on its biggest project to date. Under Project P&Aaralan, an adopt-a-school project, a school's infrastructure and utilities will be upgraded over the next three years.



BEFORE: The pediatric ICU ward of the Ospital ng Maynila.



AFTER: PAUSE breathes new life into the ICU ward.

number do the actual work.

Ayson says it is heartening that many former employees of P&A, especially those who have gone abroad, continue to send money home to contribute to PAUSE.

Francis B. Albaire, partner in charge of PAUSE, says management has thrown its full support behind PAUSE because it is an idea, avenue for P&A to reach out to its community, while it gives employees another reason to be proud of themselves and the company.

Ambitious project

Ayson says P&Aaralan is an ambitious project. But he is confident that with the employees donating an hour's equivalent of their salary a month to the fund—which is matched by P&A itself—PAUSE will see the project through.

Some 75 percent of P&A's

nearly 500 employees

contribute to the fund, and a good

number do the actual work.

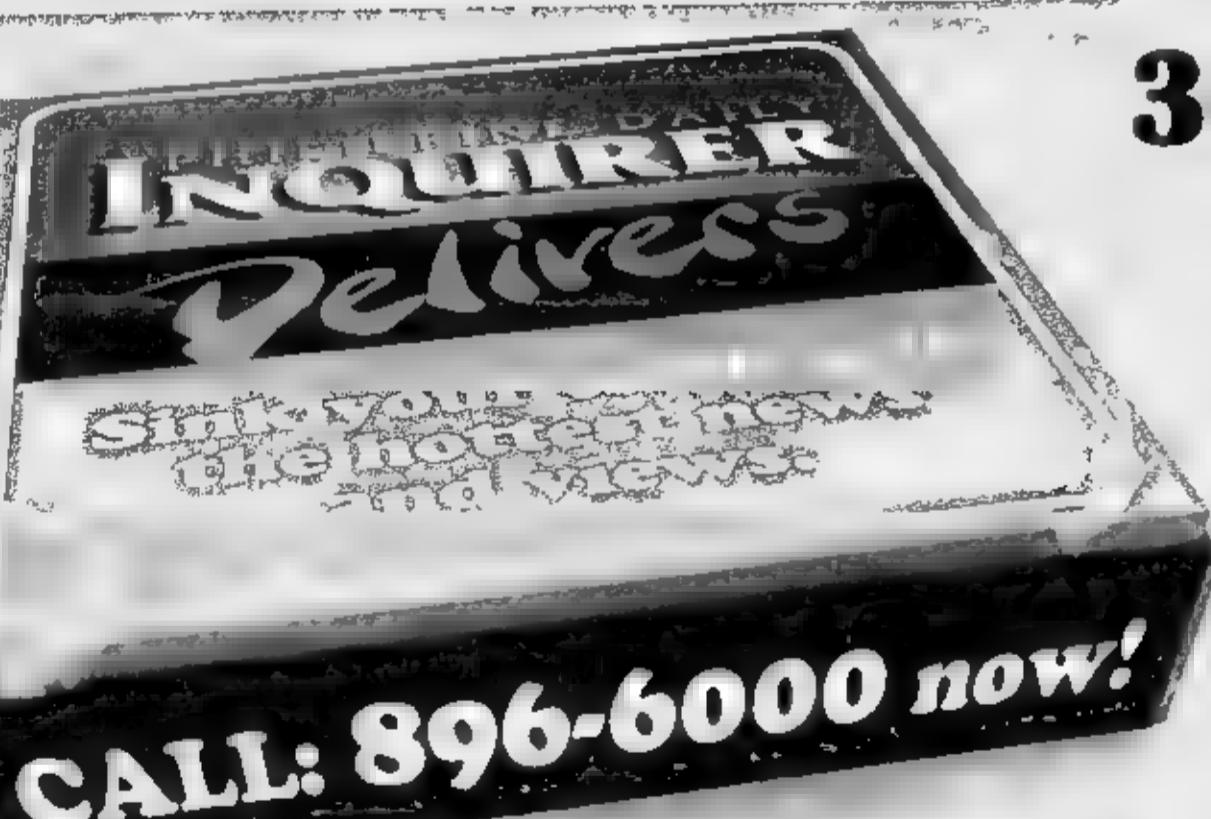
Ayson says it is heartening that many former employees of P&A, especially those who have gone abroad, continue to send money home to contribute to PAUSE.

Francis B. Albaire, partner in charge of PAUSE, says management has thrown its full support behind PAUSE because it is an idea, avenue for P&A to reach out to its community, while it gives employees another reason to be proud of themselves and the company.

"PAUSE helps motivate them because they know that the company is not just about profit or clients," Albaire says.

In helping others, they ultimately help themselves.

**360 SLICES
OF LIFE
DELIVERED
STRAIGHT
TO YOUR
DOORSTEP
EVERY DAY.**



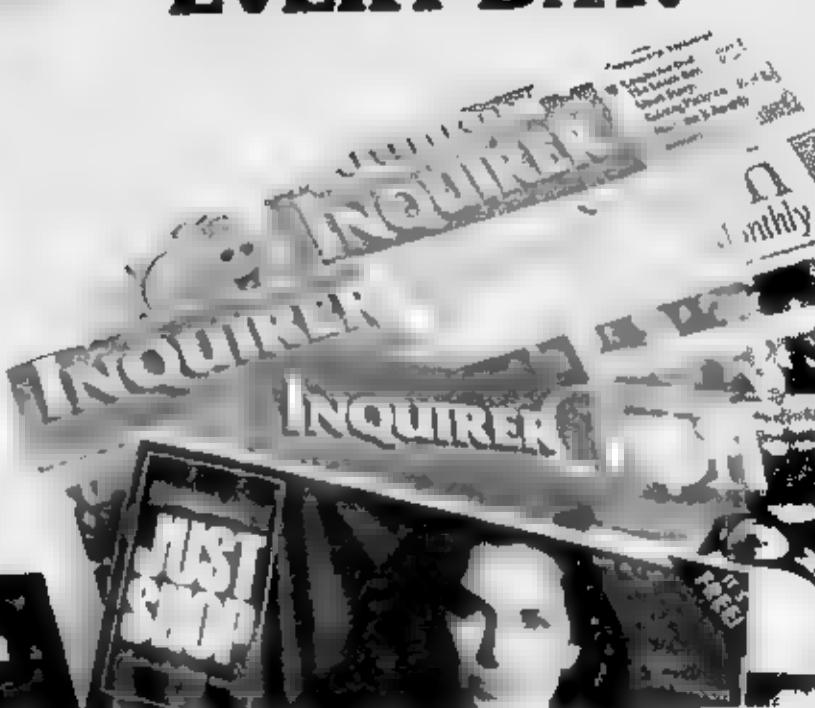
Only P18/day

Subscribe now and get up to 22 issues FREE!

EXTRAS

Subscribers get copies of the Inquirer Golf
Digest, Inquirer Badminton, Just Shop, and
Junior Inquirer FREE!

Subscription e-mail address: subscribe@inquirer.com.ph



WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

Interest rates seen rising this year

Favorable inflation expected to result in rates softening in '07

By Doris C. Dumiao

THE GOVERNMENT IS BRACING FOR A SLIGHT INCREASE IN INTEREST RATES BASED ON THE BENCHMARK 91-DAY TREASURY BILL RATES THIS YEAR.

By next year, the rates are seen to ease to below 6 percent.

The latest macro-economic assumptions used by the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee indicated a possible rise in the average 91-day T-bill rate this year to 6.8-7.4 percent from last year's actual average of 6.358 percent and 7.3 percent in 2004, official documents showed.

But by next year, the 91-day T-bill rates are seen softening to 4.8-5.5 percent with the expected favorable inflation rate regime and improvements in the government's fiscal position.

Starting 2008, when the government is expected to have wiped out its deficits, the 91-day T-bill rates were seen to slow down to 4.5-5.5 percent.

The forecasts assumed that the peso would range from 51 to 53 against the US dollar and that inflation rate would taper off starting 2007 after shrugging off the impact of the 2 percentage hike in the value added tax rate this year.

The slightly higher interest rate assumption for this year already took into consideration pressures from external markets, particularly the US Federal Reserve's continued tightening of overnight rates.

Although the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has so far kept its interest rates steady since October last year, its top officials are not ruling out a possible hike for the rest of the year given continuing threats to inflation.

The slowdown in interest rates by next year, in turn, was seen to perk up the appetite of investors to borrow for business expansion. Borrowers will tend to take advantage of the ample domestic liquidity in the financial system.

In the meantime, the BSP expects the country's inflation rate easing to 4.3-5 percent by next year despite risks of unabated rise in global oil prices. Its latest official forecasts indicated a possible slowdown to the inflation target range of 4-5 percent starting 2007, alongside expectations of stable exchange rate and softening domestic interest rates.

For this year, the latest inflation rate projection adopted by the inter-agency Development Budget Coordination Committee is a range of 7.3-7.9 percent, overshooting the target range of 4-5 percent.

Tariff proposal for crude, refined oil products opposed

By Abigail L. Ho

A TARIFF DIFFERENTIAL BETWEEN CRUDE and refined petroleum products could kill small oil players and hurt the entire downstream oil industry, an industry executive said.

Flying V chair and president Ramon Villavicencio said the government, particularly the Department of Energy, should recognize the fact that small oil players, while still unable to match their bigger counterparts, were still among "the prime movers of the Philippine economy."

Villavicencio was reacting to proposals of certain quarters to impose a tariff differential between crude and refined petroleum products to encourage continued operations of and increased investments in refineries in the country.

He said the proposal was not fair as this would result in the death of independent oil firms.

"The tariff differential will not level the playing field between the refiners and the small oil players. This could mean the death of independent oil companies," he said.

He said that even the Supreme Court had seen the error of adopting a tariff differential.

The first downstream oil industry deregulation law, RA 8180 signed in 1996, provided a 4-percent tariff differential between crude and finished products. The high court struck the law down because of that provision.

The current oil deregulation law, RA 8479 signed in 1998, does not mandate any tariff differential, putting refiners and pure finished product importers on equal footing in terms of tariffs.

The government, especially the DOE, should respect the SC decision and help protect the small oil players," Villavicencio said. "It's probably best if they can come up with a new formula that will be good for the industry, whether a big or a small player."

Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla earlier said the government was willing to explore the possibility of instituting a tariff differential between refiners and pure importers.

However, he said a careful study of the legal implications of such a move would have to be done, considering how the Supreme Court reacted when such a provision was included in the first downstream oil deregulation law.

The Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association said it would oppose any move to put in place a tariff differential between crude and refined petroleum products.

Australian school offering Entrepreneurial MBA - at IAME

Entrepreneurship Institute Australia (EIA), in recognition of the entrepreneurial talent of the Filipino as shown by the emergence of increasing numbers of Filipino billionaires in Forbes magazine's list of the world's wealthiest individuals, is offering a Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree in Entrepreneurship Management at the International Academy of Management and Economics (IAME) (eye-aim).

Participants will use the action-oriented learning approach to maximise their learning by applying theory to practice in the completion of their assignments.

Each subject involves the presentation of a body of knowledge by faculty with professional experience in the management of multinational corporations and entrepreneurial ventures. The IAME facilitators trained by EIA, all hold

post-graduate degrees in the areas that they handle from premiere universities.

The faculty boasts of a total management and teaching experience of 220 years and total resources of no less than P8.5 billion.

Seats in programme are limited to 25. Five reservations were already made at pre-media announcement phase. In preparation of the May commencement of the programme, information sessions are scheduled in April. Interested parties may contact the Admissions Officer Loren Simbulan at 896-2355; E-mail: chairmain@iame.edu.ph or testing@iame.edu.ph; Website: www.iame.edu.ph; Mobile: (0920) 2142340 or visit IAME (eye-aim) at Ayala Avenue Extension, turn left, off 1061 Metropolitan Avenue, Makati City.

Each subject involves the presentation of a body of knowledge by faculty with professional experience in the management of multinational corporations and entrepreneurial ventures. The IAME facilitators trained by EIA, all hold

Lepanto sees 70% rise in gold output

By Christine A. Gaytan

LEPANTO CONSOLIDATED MINING Co. is optimistic it would be able to post a 70 percent increase in its gold production and resume its copper operations this year.

With its labor problems now over, the company expects to produce between 22,000 and 24,000 ounces of gold per quarter, Lepanto president and COO Bryan U. Yap said in the company's stockholders meeting Monday.

In 2005, Lepanto produced 55,749 ounces of gold.

Yap said the projected quarterly output could raise for the company P300 million in net income this year.

In the first quarter, Lepanto produced 15,500 ounces of gold and 20,000 ounces of silver, he said.

Due to the rising world market prices, Yap said the company would soon revive its copper operations. A team tapped by the firm is evaluating copper resources in its Enargite and Victoria areas.

For the copper project, Lepanto is in talks with prospective partners, including Ivanhoe Mines, Anglo-American Holdings Plc. and Zijin Mining Group Company Ltd.

Yap said the company would need a foreign partner to develop the Par Southeast Project in Mankayan, Benguet which was estimated to require \$400 million in investments.

AIM ASIAN CENTER FOR ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Enhance your potential

VIE VENTURE INTO ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Start-up, Small Business, Entrepreneur, Build the Future

BUILDING THE ENTREPRENEURIAL VIE CHARACTER

MAY 23 TO JUN. 2, 2006

Do you have what it takes to be an Entrepreneur?

- Discovering your potential: a self assessment of values and preferences
- Learn to Intuit and think critically
- Develop the entrepreneurial mindset and kindle the entrepreneurial spirit
- Opportunity seeking and screening
- Business formats and options
- Entrepreneurial Games

BUILDING ONE'S ENTREPRENEURIAL VIE SKILLS

JUN. 20 TO AUG. 2, 2006

Do you want to hone your business skills and expertise in the four management functions?

- Product/Service Concept Development
- Assessing Market Potentials
- Market Research Tools
- Determining Market Feasibility
- Product Development and Operations Planning
- Matching Product to Market Needs
- Quality, Delivery and Productivity Models
- Organizing for Implementation
- Finance for Start-Ups
- Apprenticeship and Group Exercises

BUILDING THE VIE ENTERPRISE

AUG. 22 TO NOV. 14, 2006

Do you need to learn the art and science of enterprise planning and implementation?

- Enterprise Life Forces
- Environment Scanning
- Evaluation of alternatives and opportunity assessment
- Developing the Product and Market Entry Strategies
- Implementation
- Commercialization and Expansion
- Individual Venture Project Mentoring

For inquiries and reservation call: Ms. Luvy Villarueva / Ms. Liza Ayalde Tel +632 892-4011 to 25 ext. 187, 252; Telefax +632 813-3302 Email: ace@aim.edu.ph; villa@iame.edu.ph; mayalde@iame.edu.ph



EQUIS
ACCREDITED

INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

AYALA AVENUE EXTENSION, SAN ANTONIO VILLAGE, MAKATI CITY

TEL. NO. 896-2355 to 58 FAX NO. 896-23-61

E-mail: testing@iame.edu.ph Website: www.iame.edu.ph

MASTER IN ENTREPRENEURIAL BUSINESS?

This is how to do it...

Obtain an Australian degree in the Philippines in one-year: MBA in Entrepreneurial Management

Programme Overview

This MBA program is designed to foster entrepreneurial creativity and futuristic thinking for those who want to be best prepared in their profession as corporate entrepreneurs and entrepreneurs in their own right.

This programme has been designed to:

- Provide participants with knowledge of a broad range of entrepreneurial management issues in the areas of entrepreneurial leadership, new venture creation and corporate entrepreneurship.
- Enable participants to apply the knowledge gained using the action-oriented learning process to their assignments.

Programme Design and Content

The programme comprises 12 subjects and is normally delivered during twelve (12) weekend workshops spread over twelve (12) months.

Each subject involves the presentation of a body of knowledge by faculty with background on management and entrepreneurial experience.

The learning approach uses lectures, video presentations, case studies, group discussions and directed reading.

Participants use the action-oriented learning approach to maximise their learning by applying theory to practice in the completion of their assignments.

BA graduates will have the opportunity to be inducted as Fellows of a membership-based organisation associated with the Entrepreneurship Institute Australia.

Commences in May

Book for an Info Session

Non-graduate admission is possible for those with sufficient work experience

For more information, please contact: Ms. Loren G. Simbulan, Admissions Officer, International Academy of Management and Economics, Ayala Avenue Extension, San Antonio Village, Makati City, Tel. No. 896-2355 to 58 Fax No. 896-23-61 E-mail: testing@iame.edu.ph Website: www.iame.edu.ph

BUSINESS

B

SMPFC posts 11% revenue growth

Poultry, feeds businesses boosted performance in '05

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL PURE FOODS CO. (SMPFC) said its consolidated revenue in 2005 exceeded P50 billion, a growth of 11 percent from 2004 level.

SMPFC, a unit of San Miguel Corp., is involved in the production of vegetable oils, feeds, flour, poultry, fresh and processed meats and dairy products.

In a report to the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), SMPFC said its cost of sales rose 9 percent due to increases in sales volumes and in the prices of raw materials.

Net income, it said, grew 80 percent led by the growth posted by poultry and feeds businesses as well as the company's flour operations. Absolute figures were not disclosed.

Its poultry business rose 7 percent in terms of revenue due to favorable supply-demand conditions, and good selling prices.

The feed business posted an 11-percent growth to P13.9 billion driven by a 13-percent growth in sales volumes.

The flour business sustained profitability with a volume growth of 2 percent last year in spite of a relatively flat industry growth. Revenue rose 5 percent to P5.3 billion last year compared with the previous year.

The Purefoods-Hormel Co. Inc. registered double-digit sales volume and revenue growths of 14 percent and 17 percent respectively. Operating income however declined from last year due to higher raw material prices, and higher fixed costs spending, bulk of which were related to plant-expansion.

Magnolia Inc. posted P4.2 billion in revenue, 15 percent higher than year-ago level partly due to the contribution of new products such as milk and ice cream.

Operating profits of Great Food Solutions, the food service unit of the company and oper-

ator of the Smokey's franchise, grew by more than four times from 2004 level. This was due to the transfer of the commissary operations of Monterey to Great Foods in February.

The number of outlets served increased by 147 to 4,108 in 2005 from 3,961 in 2004. Smokey's outlets opened in 2005 hit 46, bringing the total number to 103 by the end of 2005.

UCPB

NOTICE OF DEFERMENT

UCPB SAVINGS BANK, INC.

ANNUAL STOCKHOLDERS MEETING

The annual stockholders meeting of UCPB Savings Bank, Inc. scheduled on April 21, 2006 has been deferred until further notice.

(Sgd.) EDWARD E. MARTIN

Asst. Corporate Secretary

PMB: April 19, 2006

Holcim profit hits P1.27B

HOLCIM PHILIPPINES INC., one of the country's leading cement makers, said its net income last year dipped 9 percent to P1.27 billion from P1.4 billion in 2004.

In a report filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the company said the decline in profit was due to the soft demand for cement last year.

Holcim said the continued rise in fuel prices, the political tension in the country and the lack of infrastructure spending contributed to lowering of demand for cement.

Demand for cement weakened by 4.3 percent last year from year-ago level.

Holcim said it was able to implement a cost-reduction program

that lowered its operating expenses by P354 million. It was also able to increase export volume last year to 1.76 million metric tons from 1.34 million metric tons in 2004.

Revenues increased 6.4 percent to P14.15 billion.

Last year, Holcim paid P2.8 billion of its maturing loans, which reduced interest expenses by P212 million. Last December, the concrete raw meal silo at its Davao plant collapsed, which stopped operations early this year. The incident is currently being investigated. Cement supply in the area is assured by shipping clinker and cement from other Holcim plants in Lugait in Misamis Oriental and Bulacan. **Elizabeth L. Sanchez**

CURRENCIES

April 18, 2006	Country	US\$	Euro	Dollar	Peso
	United States	Dollar	0.816327	1.000000	51.28 □
	Japan	Yen	0.008490	0.008490	0.4354
	United Kingdom	Pound	1.457	1.709600	90.7469
	Hong Kong	Dollar	0.05234	0.2891	5.8310
	Switzerland	Franc	0.820000	0.781311	40.0604
	Canada	Dollar	0.712887	0.873286	44.7330
	Singapore	Dollar	0.50963	0.624298	32.0146
	Australia	Dollar	0.602144	0.737626	37.8262
	Bahrain	Dinar	2.0584	2.653576	136.0780
	Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.177058	0.2163	3.3
	Burundi	Dollar	0.308045	0.622256	31.9150
	Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000391	0.00111	0.0057
	Thailand	Baht	0.021510	0.026290	1.3513
	UAE	Dirham	0.222286	0.272264	13.8420
	Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.225000	82.8192
	Argentina	Peso	0.289472	0.325293	16.5767
	Brazil	Real	0.382892	0.469043	24.0530
	Denmark	Kroner	0.134004	0.164153	8.1480
	India	Rupie	0.010153	0.022237	1.1403
	Malaysia	Ringgit	0.222463	0.272257	13.7949
	Mexico	New Peso	0.073903	0.090931	4.8425
	New Zealand	Dollar	0.139313	0.182398	31.8846
	South Africa	Rand	0.16596	0.185244	8.4741
	Korea	Won	0.01554	0.001045	0.0536
	Taiwan	NT Dollar	0.02550	0.000800	1.5739

Coke feels

... From page B1

tions of these plants

It said the restructuring costs amounted to P298 million, adding that manufacturing upgrades were ongoing in other Coca Cola Beverage facilities.

Coca Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc., the bottling arm of San Miguel has 39 manufacturing facilities and some 200 sales offices across the country. CCBPI employs more than 9,000 Filipinos, 80 percent of them outside Metro Manila.

The Coca Cola Beverage Group consists of CCBPI and its two subsidiaries—Cosmos Bottling Corp. and Philippine Beverage Partners Inc. (PhilBev). PhilBev said that cost reduction efforts and improvements in operational efficiencies

could not compensate for increases in input costs. Summer price margins resulted in a sharp drop in operating income by 63 percent to P1.7 billion in 2005 from the same period in 2004.

As a result, the Coca Cola Beverage Group reported an 8-percent drop in volume. Gain in the juice and water businesses were not enough to offset the downturn in the soft drink business as CCBPI deferred price adjustments, SMC said. Sales revenue of the Coca Cola Beverage Group hit P39.8 billion. No comparative figures were provided.

San Miguel also

said that cost reduction efforts and improvements in operational efficiencies

... From page B1

The signs are there

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

I RAISE A GLASS TO THE MEN and women behind the recent Manila International Auto Show. Considering the tenor of the times—unstable economy brought about by political uncertainties—I must say the event was amazingly good enough.

Some friends tell me it lacked the luster, if not a totally international flavor, of motor shows like those being held regularly in Tokyo or Bangkok, not to mention motor shows beyond Asian shores like the ones in Paris, Geneva or Detroit.

I say there's no point comparing ours to those held in Tokyo or Bangkok. Yet.

In the first place, Tokyo is an automotive world giant and Bangkok the undisputed motor-spearhead in the Southeast Asian region. We will not be realistic, we will only be deluding ourselves, if we say the Manila event has become as magnificent like the Tokyo and Bangkok auto shows. Illusion.

In the second place, we are only into our second international auto show while Tokyo had just held its 38th biennial motor show last November, while Bangkok had its 27th straight year of showcasing its international carnival of automobiles just last month.

Trust me. I've been to the motor shows in Tokyo and Bangkok many times and, really, they now stage auto shows as effortlessly as Maria Sharapova slips into street clothes from her fashionable tennis outfit.

But worry not, felas. We will get there soon. Political turbulence and all, we will overcome.

The signs are there. Our automotive industry is as vibrant as ever. Just look around you. New models continue to roll out of assembly lines.

The single biggest sign was when Toyota unleashed its powerhouse IMPVs (international multipurpose vehicles) such as the Fortuner, Hi-Lux and the best-selling homegrown Innova—not to mention its new Hi-



Al Mendoza

Ace. In a show of robust support to the Auto Show, Toyota even unveiled its new, state-of-the-art Previa right at the heart of the event (bravo, Sir John!).

And didn't you notice as well? The others have followed suit—Nissan unleashed its Murano, Honda its brand-new Civic, Mitsubishi the quirky quartet of Zinger, Eclipse, Strada and EVO, and Isuzu the wondrous Alterra. I heard the Civic was unwrapped amid the congas and sambas of Latin beat at the Greenbelt Makati. Wow! I mused that one; Amel Doria and Tin Tin Reyes could do nothing but forgive me for being absent again.

In closing, I am just wondering, though, why Volvo and BMW did not fully unravel their aces at the Auto Show that had an amazingly expanded space of nearly 10,000 square meters from its old 5,000 sq m? Maybe next year Albert, Lito?

SUREFIRE SUZUKI. The Suzuki Auto Show in Mandaiyong has opened, offering Suzuki's usual array of vehicles, such as the Suzuki APV, Grand Vitara, Swift, Jimny and Brava. It also offers maintenance and repair service, and sales parts. Said Rick Panilis: "We are giving free service estimates and 10 percent discount on parts and labor, and free comprehensive insurance or zero percent interest and low down payment on Suzuki APV GLX automatic."

QUOTE ME. To you, it may be all right to tailgate but not your passengers.

Comments to juen@pidrds.net.



Racing dynasties

POLITICAL DYNASTIES ABOUND in this politics-obsessed country, but are you aware that we have motor racing dynasties, too? The existence of motor sport-driven families is a fascinating facet of modern Philippine life that you will discover when you read "Fast Lane: A History of Motor Sports in the Philippines."

"Fast Lane" is a coffee-table book written by former Philippine Star motoring editor Junep Ocampo on commission from the Automobile Association Philippines which will launch it as part of AAP's 75th anniversary celebration next month.

AAP (formerly the Philippine Motor Association) has all the reason to publish "Fast Lane," being the country's oldest motoring club and the only Philippine affiliate of the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), the governing body for motor sports worldwide. As the FIA's affiliate, AAP officiates at all Philippine motor sport events and issues the Racing Driver's License to qualified drivers as well as motor sport organizing permits.

Preview

Being the editor of "Fast Lane," I got a sneak preview of the book's text and action-packed, full-page photos, in the process learning how motor sports in its various disciplines—karting, slalom, drag racing, rally, rally cross, touring car, circuit racing, Asian Formula 3 and 4x4 off-roading—came to develop in our country.

The exciting world of motor sports showcases daring young people who train and practice rigorously and take dangerous risks

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

on the race track to satisfy their passion for speed. Racing fanaticism is so infectious that it is often passed down from one generation to the next, thereby producing motor racing dynasties. "Fast Lane" devotes entire chapters to four dynasties: those of Jose "Pocholo" Ramirez, Dante Silverio, Eddie Marceo and Arthur Tuason.

Pocholo Ramirez, winner of the Driver of the Year title five times in the 1970s, has four sons who took up racing as soon as they could drive. The names of Jose Andre "Kookie," Georges, Louie and Miguel and Pocholo's daughter-in-law Menchie have often appeared in the winners' circle of various motor sport events. Now, Pocholo's grandsons Andre and Stefan are also into car racing. Pocholo and Georges manage the Subic International Speedway, the circuit race track that was opened in 1994. But both father and son still continue to race as do Kookie, Louie, Miguel and Menchie.

The Silverios

Dante Silverio was another dashing speedway star here and abroad in the 1970s who became the only driver to top both circuit racing and rally events in the same year when he won the Royal Rally of Champions. Soon enough, Dante's son Jojo followed in his

footsteps. Dante and Jojo sometimes raced together as a team, but on occasion Jojo competed with his father, even defeating him in the 1987 Makati Freedom Rally for a 1-2 Silverio father-and-son finish. Although Dante retired from racing in the 1980s, Jojo still joins events at Subic and the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Eddie Marceo, the son of rubber and steel industrialist Jose P. Marceo, was a champion drag racer in the 1970s who soon moved up to circuit racing and Formula cars. Eddie's eldest son Jovy, who always accompanied him to races, showed a talent for racing at an early age. Eddie knew it was time for him to retire from racing when Jovy beat him on a go-kart. Later, Eddie supported Jovy's participation in races in the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia, but Jovy's promising career ended in tragedy on May 17, 1992 when his Lola Cosworth hit the wall during a practice run at the Indianapolis Speedway for the Indy 500 race.

Racing school

Arthur Tuason joined drag races on Quezon Avenue in the 1960s when he was in his teens, then left for England in 1971 to study at the Jim Russell Driving School. Upon

returning to Manila in 1972, Arthur resumed competing in circuit and rally events and won the Driver of the Year title. When his sons JP and Mike were old enough, Arthur exposed them to karting at Libis and Carmona and supported their participation in motor sports. Arthur won the coveted Driver of the Year title again in 1994 after he, JP and Mike finished 1-2-3 at the Subic International Speedway.

Arthur's dream of establishing a racing school was fulfilled by JP three years after Arthur's untimely death in 1996. Today, the Tuason Racing School trains and produces the future champions of motor sport such as Asean Queen of Karts Michelle Bungaray.

Aside from these motor sport dynasties, "Fast Lane" devotes five chapters to the greatest Filipino race drivers of all time, father of Philippine motor sports Arsenio "Docie" Laurel, who set a precedent by winning the Macau Grand Prix two years in a row (1962 and 1963) aside from winning numerous local motor sport events. He planned to build a circuit racing track on Corregidor before he perished in a fiery crash at the Macau Grand Prix in 1967.

(E-mail comments to asevil@inquirer.com.ph)

Vintage cars motorcade to kick off AAP auto show week

A PARADE OF SOME OF THE most impressive vintage cars will kick off on May 7 the weekend celebration marking the 75th anniversary of the Automotive Association Philippines (formerly the Philippine Motor Association), the country's oldest car club.

Launching ceremonies for the motorcade will be held at the Manila Hotel, where the AAP had its first office. About 30 vintage cars will join the parade that will go around Manila, Pasay City and Makati before ending up in Intramuros where the best vintage cars will be awarded.

The motorcade will be participated in by the Vintage Car Club of the Philippines, Mini Car Club of the Philippines, Volkswagen Club, Karmann Registry Club of the Philippines, Mercedes-Benz Club of the Philippines and the British Roadster.

Auto show

As part of the celebrations, the AAP will also hold the first-ever AAP Auto Show at The Forum at the

PICC complex from May 11 to 14. The event will showcase the latest car models from Toyota, Ford, Isuzu, Honda and Hyundai, plus a bazaar of accessories and a photo exhibition of Philippine motoring history.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

.

BIR wants to keep power to cut deals

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE wants to keep its power to strike compromise agreements with tax delinquents.

BIR Commissioner Jose Mario Buñag said forging compromise deals was sometimes necessary to avoid lengthy court debates and hasten the collection of taxes.

Buñag said he saw no need to alter the National Internal Revenue Code, which some members of Congress want amended to curtail the BIR's authority to strike compromise deals.

The move was prompted by the plan of the BIR to enter into a deal with the Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (PDIC) regarding the insurer's P7.6-billion tax case.

Buñag said the BIR has in fact not yet entered into a "compromise settlement" with PDIC.

Nelson Aspe, director for the BIR's Makati revenue region, said compromise settlement technically means that the BIR would only collect 40 percent or 10 percent of the total tax liability of an individual or entity depending on the capacity to pay.

In the case involving PDIC, Aspe said, the agreement was that the BIR would only waive penalties but still collect the principal amount of back taxes in the event that the Department of Justice rules that PDIC is liable to pay taxes.

On the other hand, if the DOJ agrees with PDIC's position that the insurer is not liable to pay taxes, then the BIR would no longer run after the insurer but would be allowed to keep the P1.5-billion payment made by the PDIC.

The PDIC earlier paid the BIR P1.5 billion as advanced payment for its alleged back taxes.

The PDIC said it should not be liable to pay the taxes because its functions were merely spun-off from those of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, which enjoys tax perks.

More flights from China to Subic eyed

By Ronnel W. Domingo

AT LEAST THREE MORE LOCAL GOVERNMENTS in China are interested in opening direct chartered flights between the mainland and the Subic freeport, according to the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority.

SBMA Administrator Armand C. Arreza said in a statement that officials of Shijiazhuang and Taizhou cities, as well as one municipality in Southern China expressed support for direct flights to Subic.

"We want to explore these with priorities," Arreza said, adding that more Asian cities would want to establish direct flights to Subic in light of several improvements being implemented in the freeport.

These include upgrades to the Subic Bay International Airport and the ongoing Subic Bay Port Development project.

The SBMA official explained that Shijiazhuang City is the capital of Hebei province which has a population of 68 million and is considered the sixth richest province of China.

The proposed flights would add to the current domestic and international direct flights such as Mandarin Air's Subic-Taiwan route, Cebu Pacific's Subic-Incheon (South Korea), and Air Philippines Subic-Guangzhou flights.

**NOW YOU HAVE A CHOICE
WHICH MAKES US THE
NATURAL ONE**

Only HP Integrity Servers allow you to run your choice of operating systems

HP INTEGRITY SERVER

Intel® Xeon® Processor
More RAM
Protect your business
Simpler management

1-800-1441-6688
or (632) 867-3557
ph.contact@hp.com

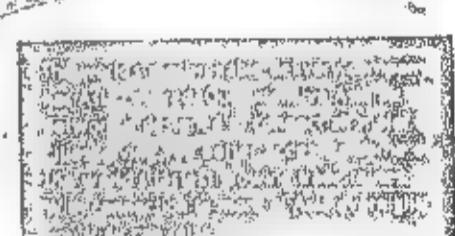


Relax: We connect

39MILLION

businesses across Asia overnight

7 6 5
www.upsinasia.com





LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Fornoso

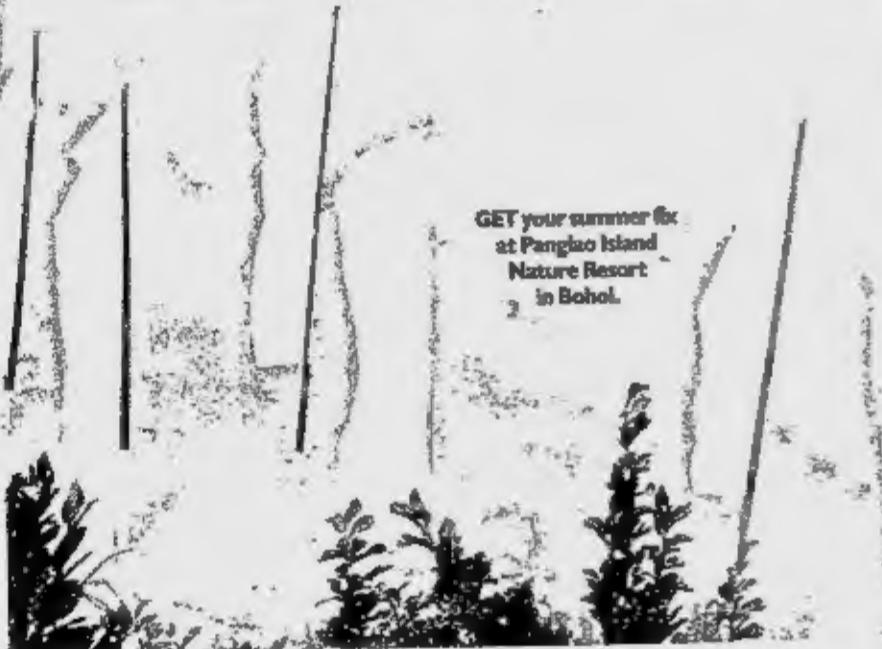
Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor

Send feedback: [inquirerlife.name/age/city/message to 2207 \(Globe\) and 388 \(Smart\) or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph](mailto:inquirerlife.name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 388 (Smart) or email us at pr_lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph)

Have a WOW SUMMER!

Part 2

Continuing our tribute to wonderful places in the Philippines, this week we take you to Cebu, Camiguin and Bohol. Aren't we lucky to have over 7,000 beautiful islands to explore?



GET your summer fix at Panglao Island Nature Resort in Bohol.

Precious Panglao

This Bohol resort is the ultimate summer fantasy with all the works

By Irene C. Perez

PICTURE THE TALCUM-SOFT WHITE sands of Bohol, breezy cabanas, the cool sea breeze on your skin and the whiff of sea mist. Throw in gorgeous hotties and chocolates on your bed every night.

Panglao is the ultimate summer fantasy with all the works. Your postcard-perfect paradise.

And then it rains.

Bummer? Not really. Even if there were occasional drizzles every now and then, Panglao

Island Nature Resort in Bohol was a superb hideaway to celebrities, models and media people who were recently invited to the three-day Niven White Summer event.

Bohol virgins

Okay, so most of us were Bohol virgins. As a first timer, I expected the mandatory tarsier- and dolphin-watching bit. The weather didn't quite go well with that. We had the famous Loboc River Cruise, instead.

We got into a banca-mounted restaurant where native Boholano dishes were served. A guy in local costume serenaded us as we cruised while having lunch. He sang a series of Beatles classics; I heard the guy in the other boat do a Cueshe.

Boracay has been, no point, mentioned, not to mention crowded. A lifestyle fixture even said it looks like

A Promise of Satisfaction

Alta Vida

at San Rafael Estates

Brgy. San Rafael, San Rafael, Bohol

Choose your ideal home among these beautifully-designed house models at Alta Vida and be delighted with the affordable prices & flexible terms we offer.



WALNUT

115.80 sqm usable floor area
3 BR • 2T & B • Roof Deck

Kitchen & Living area • Garage



CYPRESS

157.50 sqm usable floor area
3 BR • 2T & B • Veranda

Kitchen & Living area • Roof deck

OPEN HOUSE
on April 22, 2006

FUTURA
ESTATE

The Value-Added Models of
FILWEST LAND, INC.
www.filwestland.com



Local Sun-to-Sun calls and texts only

DIET BE DAMNED. Feast on fresh seafood and Boholano dishes on the beach.

Precious Panglao

From page C1

"Greenbelt 3 transported into an island."

Bohol allows for a more tranquil experience, but it doesn't mean less of a party. It means cleaner beaches, pristine sands and having your piña colada without someone smashing into you while catching his frisbee.

Beach bomb

When in Panglao Nature Island Resort with friends, ask for a cabana overlooking the sea. Ah, the sea. Get a sportless mind off school or office work while baking under the sun. The beach is a cove-like short stretch. You can leisurely walk its entire length in minutes.

If you had had enough of saltwater, there's the sparkling infinity pool (great for photos for your Friendster account!) that melts into the sea. It has a Seahorse Pool Bar—shaped like but not inhabited by one—so that you can have your next piña colada without leaving the water.

Some merers from the shore is a charming manmade islet. You can reach it by foot during low tide. If it's high tide, you can either swim or get a ferry ride.

Nivea transformed the islet into a picnic grove during lunch and a chill-out nook during dinner.

Games and cheers

And what's the beach without summer games? Press peeps, models and actors battled it out in fun games like water polo, beach volleyball, bench sorters and kayak tug-of-war.

The brawny ones like Paolo Paraiso, Antonio Aquitania and Wendell Ramos played tough. Alessandra de Rossi and Bubbles Paraiso remained cuties even at play.

For eternal non-athletes like me, well, I was a one-woman cheering squad for my team.

Think UAAP—pure screams, no drums. Good thing Nivea's marketing madame Rica King joined in the rally.

For some "dry sport," there's a game room where you can shoot some pool, play table tennis and darts. If you have more time and moolah, ask about scuba diving, cave diving, island-hopping tours and kayaking activities. Snorkeling and windsurfing are available for beach bums, too.

If those activities are not enough, there's a

BIANCA
King fears
no sun
with
Milani
Whitening
Sunblock.

KAYAK
with
Andrew
Wolf.



CLOSE encounters of the pawikan kind.

The other side of Camiguin is as compelling as its famous lanzones

EXTREME experience

well-equipped gym, a winding jogging path and sauna for fitness junkies.

Charming cabanas

My cabana was far from the beach front, but you can always ask someone to drive you in a cart to your room if you get too tired from sports.

The spacious high-ceiling, thatched-roof hut makes for a refreshing snooze. It has satellite TV so "American Idol" addicts won't miss an episode.

I loved the rocking chair to pieces, and the Jacuzzi at the balcony was perfect for a private dip.

If it gets too cold outside, run a bubble bath with aromatic foaming oil, light up some candles and soak in the bath tub instead.

Being a "nature resort" preserved in its natural glory, Panglao warns guests of fireflies, bugs, bees, house lizards, frogs and pythons, though.

So don't be a brat if you happen to see bugs

outside your room.

As a treat, Cadbury chocolates were delivered in our room—a different kind every night. Tired from pseudo cheerleading, I capped up the games with a calming massage using Nivea oil at the makeshift spa.

Nivea wrapped up the Bohol experience with the fun games awards night. The Loboc Children's Choir performed during the farewell dinner, and now I know why these angels often make it to print and TV.

The kids did three sets of songs and they left us dreamy with dropped jaws. I guess everyone was so awed that almost all teams donated their prize money to the choir.

Again, it rained during our last night, but it didn't stop us from partying. Bubbles from Premier Wines and Spirits were served and everyone was tanned, tipsy and dancing—basically hanging on to our last night at the precious island.

Rain and all, we loved Bohol.

E-mail the author at iperez@inquirer.com.ph. Visit www.nivea.com and www.panglaoiland.com

WORKINGMOM Magazine

and **METROBANK**
present

FEMME
VERA

Lifeworks Series:

a quarterly workshop on Work-Life Balance

Summer Escapades:
Boredom Busting Summer Activities
for Moms and Kids

Speaker: Ms. Maribel Dionisio

April 22, 2006
9:00 am - 12:00 noon
Restaurant 9501, 14/F
ELCC Building, Mo. Ignacia St.
Quezon City

For inquiries and
pre-registration,
please call
Kristine Tuazon
or Lou Gonzales
at 415-2762

Email: lou.gonzales@abs-cbn.com
kristine.tuazon@abs-cbn.com

All workshop sessions are for FREE but
PRE-REGISTRATION IS A MUST

**ABS
CBN**
PUBLISHING, INC.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

By Christian B. Bautista
2bUI Correspondent

CAMIGUIN, WITH ITS extravagant agricultural festivals and its unique ancestral homes, exudes an air of serenity that seems to turn back the hands of time.

Retaining its old-world charms despite scattered tinges of progress, Camiguin is a manifestation of the quintessential Filipino small town. In all respects, the island is a picturesque connection to the past.

However, beneath its calm exterior and attractive beaches lies an opportunity for adventure that would prove formidable to even the most experienced thrill-seeker. With its treacherous hiking trails and beautiful dive sites, Camiguin offers more than an opportunity to sunbathe.

Indeed, Camiguin did not get its moniker of "island born of fire" for nothing. From a bird's-eye view (which is probably the first perspective most travelers would see of the place), it is obvious there is more to Camiguin than sandy beaches.

Its most noticeable quality is the abundance of volcanoes (seven), the most famous of which is Mt. Hibok-Hibok. This characteristic has been the town's primary source of lore, with the fame of the Sunken Cemetery and the haunting memorial for the town then known as Cotta Bato, both of which relate to Mt. Vulcan Daan's explosion in 1871.

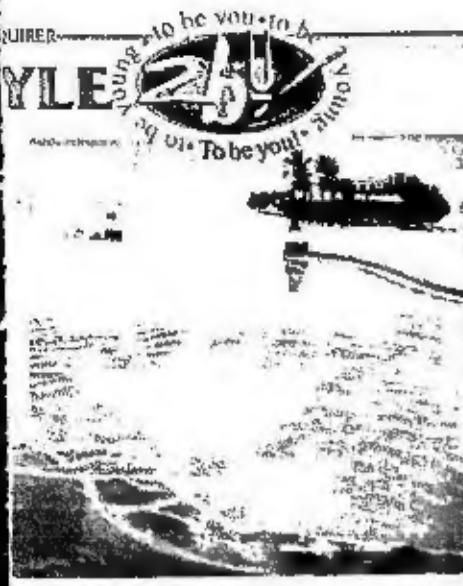
Beautiful spots
A journey to Camiguin would not be complete without getting your feet wet. The is-

land, with its proliferation of soft corals and solidified underwater lava formations, has some of the country's most beautiful diving spots. Most notable of these is White Island, a white sandbar that changes its shape according to tide.

Adventure-seeking landlubbers, however, would not be left out with the arduous canyoning trail to Kitabawasan Falls. The path, which culminates at the brink of the falls' 160-meter drop, is highlighted by a thrilling "natural water slide."

Less daring travelers would also find numerous places to visit. On top of the list would be Agohay, the island's most prominent sandy beach. The location is also known for its soda, cold and hot springs, some of which are told to have the ability to cure internal ailments.

In addition, several historic churches can be found in different parts of the island. The most popular is Sto. Rosario in Sagay, which was built in 1882.



THE ENTICING infinity pools

MENE PEREZ



THIS Panglao resort boasts of cozy cabanas, as well as a swing and play area for kids.

MENE PEREZ

Panglao Island Nature Resort

How to get there: Get a plane to Tagbilaran. Panglao Island lies just opposite Tagbilaran City, and is connected to Bohol via two bridges. It is a 15-minute trip by land from downtown Tagbilaran, and an hour-and-a-half ferry ride from Cebu City.

What to bring: All your basic beach stuff. Stock up on sunblock! If you want to bask in the sun but have the "ayokong umi'um" syndrome, bring along Nivea Sun's line of whitening sunblocks for face and body with SPF 30 and 50.

Nivea's Rica King promises you won't turn into toast even if you bake for long periods. Nivea Sun Face Sunblock Whitening Cream and Nivea Sun Whitening Sunblock lotion protect your skin, so you don't have to worry even if it's your debut next week.

If you prefer a golden tan, spritz on Nivea Sun Oil Spray. It has jojoba oil that moisturizes skin for an even, rich color.

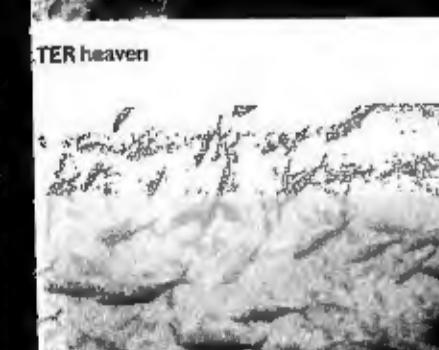
What to do: All sorts of water sports, so don't forget your aqua shoes and beach gear.

What to eat: Filipino, Continental and Oriental dishes are served in the restaurant. You can have your meals in the gazebo with full view of the sea.

What to buy: The Bohol classic Peanut Kisses now has spin-offs—peanut cookies, choco-peanut cookies, peanut *pastillas*, *turon de mani*, peanut bars—practically everything peanut-laced. It's cheaper to buy 'em at the grocery of Bohol Quality, the nearest local mall.



TTER heaven



Iemo



m&m's

TIMEZONE

In the mood for fun?



Get 3 FREE GAMES worth as much as P60!
at Timezone when you buy specially marked packs of M&M's® chocolate candies. It's FREE...here's how:

Collect specially marked wrappers of M&M's® chocolate candies & exchange them for FREE M&M's® powercards at any Timezone outlet nationwide!

Want more FUN?! — These powercards are re-loadable!

To claim your special edition powercards, simply buy specially marked packs of M&M's® chocolate candies & surrender the marked wrappers in any Timezone outlet nationwide. Refer to the chart below to avail of this special offer.

Collect any of the following M&M's® wrappers:

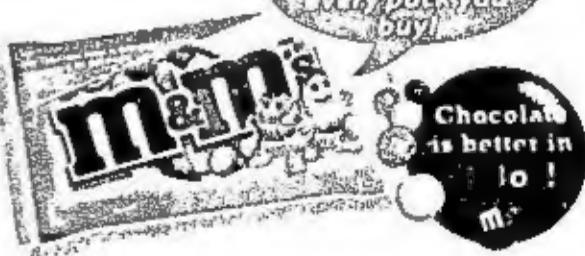
- 6 (40g) packs of M&M's®
- 3 (100g) packs of M&M's®
- 2 (200g) packs of M&M's®
- 1 (202.5g) pack of M&M's®
- 1 (240g) pack of M&M's®

* Valid on "yellow-swiper" games only. "Yellow-swiper" games are normally priced at P10-P20. Your powercard allows you 3 swipes on "yellow-swiper" arcade games.

Your promo powercard will not be honored when swiped in "red-swiper" and "blue-swiper" games.

Look for this promo sticker on M&M's® pack you buy!

Chocolate is better in 3D!



Introducing!!!

Your favorite M&M's® characters in collectible powercards.

M&M's® Registered Trademark ©Mars, 2006. Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0261, Series of 2006.

KICK OUT GOUT!!!

*Gout is a kind of arthritis specifically caused by too much uric acid in the joints. Uric acid may be released from various dietary sources such as meat, seafood, and alcohol.

For more information

1-800-10-6-HEALTH
FEE OF CHARGE: 432584
or 637-48-90

The premiere city of the South has lots to offer in charm, chow and crafts

Fast decision. 10-year fixed.
Rock-bottom rates.
We bring your new home closer.

Term Period	Interest Rate	Monthly Amortization
1-year	10.25%	P 9,817
2-year	11.00%	P10,322
3-year	11.25%	P10,493
5-year	11.50%	P10,665
10-year	12.00%	P11,011

* Rates apply only for new term loan releases and purpose is acquisition, construction or refinancing. Rates are subject to change without prior notice.

** For every loan amount of P1,000,000 for 20 years.

Call 845-8772 or text PSBANK HOME AD <your name> <your landline nos> <your email address> then send to 391-772 for Smart or 0917-890-2327 for Globe and other users.

Get it now at any
PSBank branch
nationwide



AHHCHOO! Comedian Giselle Sanchez shares tips on how to stay AHHCHOO-free.



AHHCHOO! Comedian Giselle Sanchez awakes to endless and bothersome sneezing due to allergic rhinitis. With Benadryl AH, she breezes through the day without nagging sneezes.

Comedian Giselle Sanchez can't afford to be bothered by allergic rhinitis. As a sought-after corporate show host, singer, actress, wife, and mother, her schedule is packed—and dealing with the bothersome symptoms of allergic rhinitis is no laughing matter.

A Closer Look at Allergic Rhinitis

Allergic rhinitis happens when there is swelling in the nose lining or nasal membrane caused by exposure to allergens such as house dust mites, pollen, animal dander, or pollution. When inhaled by allergic persons, allergens are substances that trigger the symptoms of allergic rhinitis such as sneezing, runny nose and itchy, watery eyes.

A person who suffers from allergic rhinitis may sneeze repeatedly. The sneezing usually follows a pattern and may occur almost daily, especially upon waking up in the morning.

Airborne elements such as cigarette smoke and strong perfume scents can aggravate symptoms of allergic rhinitis.

Research shows that a number of allergic rhinitis sufferers confuse their



condition with the common cold and as such, self-medicate with common cold remedies.

Helpful Tips

Help control the effects of allergic rhinitis and its bothersome symptoms by cleaning your homes regularly, especially your beddings. This helps

effort to keep him neat and clean by giving him regular baths," shares Giselle.

Remember that allergic rhinitis is different from the common colds. Giselle narrates: "I didn't know the term allergic rhinitis until I had myself examined by a doctor. All this time I thought I just had colds." As a result, Giselle took medication for colds, which expectedly did not relieve her allergic rhinitis symptoms.

Get instant relief from the bothersome symptoms of allergic rhinitis with a specifically formulated for allergic rhinitis, like Benadryl AH (Diphenhydramine HCl) capsule. With Benadryl AH (Diphenhydramine HCl) capsule, Giselle is able to breeze through her many roles without the bothersome symptoms of allergic rhinitis such as sneezing, runny nose and itchy watery eyes.

Diphenhydramine Hydrochloride
Benadryl® AH



Proven Relief from Allergic Rhinitis

Read label directions carefully. If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 2006

LIFESTYLE

Cebu buys and bites

WOODEN necklaces sold on the streets—only P20!

Text and photos by Katrina Yap
2bUI Correspondent

THE LAST TIME I WAS IN CEBU WAS FOR the Sinulog Festival. The place was bursting with activities. The major malls were on sale, there were concerts and parties every single day. Sinulog dancing was everywhere—the streets, inside the malls, even

Thousands joined the procession of the Miraculous Image of Santo Niño, and the grand parade the following day was attended by swarms of people traveling by foot, braving the unforgiving sun.

Traffic was terrible. According to the locals, that wasn't typical, and was only due to the volume of tourists from in and out of the country taking part in the festivities.

The best hotels within the city were fully booked. My companions and I ended up staying in a hotel in Guadalupe. I had not been to Guadalupe before, so it helped that we had hired a vehicle and a driver to take us around.

Given the timing of our visit, our trip centered on Sinulog-related activities. But since I was traveling with a group of girls, it was understood we had to make time for shopping. I was also blessed because they didn't have any qualms about pigging out, and we ate to our hearts' content (perhaps the highlight of the trip).

Jewelry designer Happy David happened to be in Cebu then for business. She showed us around for a day and gave us a list of places to visit as she couldn't accompany us all throughout our stay. Well, we didn't even get to see a quarter of the restos, cafs and stores she recommended.

Here are some of them, plus a few good ones we came across on our own.

Abaseria Deli and Resto Café

39-B Cong. Noel St., Villa Aurora, Cebu City

Abaseria is a homey deli and resto café that serves mostly Filipino food. The servings are quite



SOMETHING smells fishy. Mountains of dried fish line the Tabo-an public market.

small, but the food's really good. Try the adobo-style bangus belly (P175), Filipino-style humba (P125), baked ribs with ginger (P110), and tofu with organic mushroom (P175). The sement and lotik with coco jam are superb.

Abaseria also sells accessories and home accents, among them beaded necklaces (P80) and bangles (P30-P100).

CnT Lechon

J. Lima St., Mabolo (across SM Cebu)

You can't go to Cebu without tasting CnT Lechon, which is just across SM Cebu. For less than P600, there was more than enough lechon, chicharon bulaklak, rice and drinks to feed five

Goodah Gud

935-B Selinus Drive, Lahug, Cebu City

The food took forever to arrive at Goodah Gud, but all was forgiven with its tasty dishes: fresh and baked oysters (P120/kg) and calamari (P55/100g). The prawns and batucolong weren't

Kaona Grill

Ayala, Cebu City

An al fresco resto, Kaona is a very relaxing



HATS galore



MUST-TRY suman and lotik

place to enjoy a meal. Food is cheap, too: Spareribs and rice cost P75, while datandan juice is only P20.

Tabo-an Public Market

Searching for pasalubong? Head to the Tabo-an Public Market. Here's where one of the girls' desperate search for danggit ended (I, on the other hand, was on the hunt for Carcar chicharon. I also got my chicharon, plus dried mangoes and otsup, from the market).

Pan Arts

P Remedio St. Banilad, Mandaue City

Pan Arts is another accessories haven. Don't let the exterior fool you. It may be a factory, but inside are fashion accessories being sold at 50-percent off. Necklaces went for P20, and a pair of earrings for P10 (you read that right). Timing is important when shopping here. When you see something you like, grab it, as there are only limited stocks.

Avatar, Bellavista Hotel

M.L. Quezon Highway, Lapu-Lapu City

Mactan, Cebu

If you like quirky, kikay bags and accessories, don't leave for Manila without dropping by The Bellavista Hotel along the M.L. Quezon Highway (it's on the way to the airport). Inside is Avatar, a showroom of accessories for export. Bags are priced at P300 and up. The other stuff, however, are quite pricey. No haggling here, but I gave in and shelled our P490 for a bracelet reminiscent of Candy Land.

E-mail the author at tri@i-manila.com.ph

KAONA Grill's busy kitchen



WHERE TO GO IN THE SOUTH OF CEBU

How to get there: By air or sea. A sea trip from Manila to Cebu takes 18-22 hours. But that allows you to spend quality time with your companions, and could prove to be another adventure altogether.

What to bring: Cash. There are many a lot of ATMs and most establishments do accept credit cards, but it's still best to transact in cash when in Cebu. Imagine the hassle should your card get captured by an ATM machine. You'll also need cash when buying from flangges and markets.

Camera, it's a travel essential.

Map. A must-bring if you don't have friends from Cebu who can show you around.

Watch. You'll lose track of time when you're having fun!

Your cell phone, charger, extra battery. Whether you're travelling with a big or small group, you and your buddies might decide on splitting up and just meeting up again, especially if you have different "goals" (i.e., shopping, food-tripping, exploring, etc.). You'll need a cell phone so you can keep in touch while exploring by yourself.

Comfortable shoes. There's a lot of walking around during shopping or tours.

Flip flops. Not all hotels provide slippers for their guests.

Swimsuits. Cebu has clean and beautiful beaches, especially in Mactan.

What to do: Revisit history by checking out Magellan's Cross, the Taoist Temple, Fort San Pedro, the Chapel of the Last Supper, Magellan's Monument, the Lapu-lapu Shrine... the list goes on.

Go to the beach. Engage in various water sports and activities, or just chill.

Go shopping. Be on the lookout for sale events.

What to eat: Seafood, inihaw, lechon, chicharon, dried mangoes and dried fruits.

What to buy: Check out hand-crafted souvenirs and accessories. If you're into music, look for a good guitar in Lapu-lapu. Don't forget the pasalubong!

Other tips: Pack light. Should you forget something, the mall is just around the corner.

Pig out! But don't forget to brush your teeth! During the last Sinulog, Oral-B had doctors from the UP College of Dentistry conducting free check-ups through a roving counter and a booth within Metro Ayala. People were eating huge amounts of food with the fiesta as an excuse.

What better opportunity to reinforce oral health care?

Rent a vehicle/driver if you don't have somebody to show you around. This way, you don't lose time when moving from one place to another. This also decreases chances of you getting lost. Request for a driver who can converse in English or Tagalog if you don't speak Cebuano.

Bring a friend. An adventure is much more enjoyable when with company (it also helps if your companion speaks Cebuano because he/she will be able to haggle when you're shopping!).

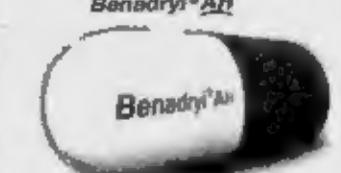
Keep yourself hydrated. Always bring a bottle (or two) of water with you.

Enjoy the trip! Try not to see your itinerary as a to-do checklist. Don't rush activities just for the purpose of accomplishing them. Use your itinerary as a mere guide.

minimize the amount of house dust mite droppings in your home environment which is a major trigger of allergic reactions.

Pets must be kept well-groomed. "I have a rottweiler named Frodo. Since I discovered I have allergic rhinitis, I have made a more conscious

Diphenhydramine Hydrochloride
Benadryl® AH



Proven Relief from Allergic Rhinitis

Read label directions carefully. If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

condition with the common cold and as such, self-medicate with common cold remedies.

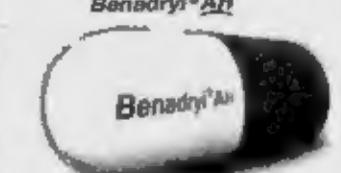
Helpful Tips

Help control the effects of allergic rhinitis and its bothersome symptoms by cleaning your homes regularly, especially your beddings. This helps

minimize the amount of house dust mite droppings in your home environment which is a major trigger of allergic reactions.

Pets must be kept well-groomed. "I have a rottweiler named Frodo. Since I discovered I have allergic rhinitis, I have made a more conscious

Diphenhydramine Hydrochloride
Benadryl® AH



Proven Relief from Allergic Rhinitis

Read label directions carefully. If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

condition with the common cold and as such, self-medicate with common cold remedies.

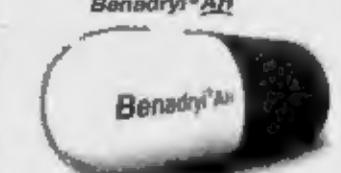
Helpful Tips

Help control the effects of allergic rhinitis and its bothersome symptoms by cleaning your homes regularly, especially your beddings. This helps

minimize the amount of house dust mite droppings in your home environment which is a major trigger of allergic reactions.

Pets must be kept well-groomed. "I have a rottweiler named Frodo. Since I discovered I have allergic rhinitis, I have made a more conscious

Diphenhydramine Hydrochloride
Benadryl® AH



Proven Relief from Allergic Rhinitis

Read label directions carefully. If symptoms persist, consult your doctor.

condition with the common cold and as such, self-medicate with common cold remedies.</p